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ardial

Friday March 29 1996

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46,513

The latest books and music

Review

Plus: Melyyn Bragg, Doris Lessing



The wild genius

Terry Gilliam interview

Frank Keating on sport and mother's ruin

Gin and isotonic

Sport backpage

Tories tout 11-plus option

John Carvel
Education Editor

GILLIAN Shephard, the Education Secretary, yesterday paved the way for the gradual demolition of comprehensive schooling when she said every state secondary may get the right to select its entire intake, with the option of forming local 11-plus exam consortia to pick the most able pupils.

In a quickening of the pace of pre-election manoeuvres, she bowed to pressure from John Major to open clear blue water between Conservatives and Labour and revive opportunities for needing Tony Blair about his choice of a partially selective grant-maintained school for her son and the decision of Harriet Harman, to send her son to a grammar school.

Mrs Shephard promised a white paper in June on giving all state schools greater control over budgets with a diminished role for local education authorities. It would include options for allowing more selection at 11.

Echoing the Prime Minister, she said the proposal might result in "a grammar school in every town". She wanted more grammar schools "because I think they are popular, successful and reflect parental choice. We could certainly strengthen the range and variety of schools if we made it possible for more of them to become selective." State comprehensives can select up to 15 per cent of their pupils without seeking Government approval. One option would increase this to 100 per cent.

There would be no return to the "outmoded uniformity" of a national 11-plus examination, but she would be perfectly happy if groups of secondary schools formed local consortia to manage the examination of 11-year-olds. David Blunkett, the shadow education secretary, said Mrs



Shephard "appeared to have given in to the ludicrous proposals emanating from the Downing Street policy unit".

During her recent consultations on increasing selection at 11, only 15 of the 15,000 responses supported choosing more pupils by ability. "She knows there is no demand across the country for increased selection."

Mr Major's advisers in a rightwing think tanks said the good exam results achieved at many independent and grant-maintained schools could be spread if more schools became selective. But Mrs Shephard has been suspicious of the theorists and preferred to concentrate on more workaday measures for improving standards in all schools.

In a lecture to the Institute of Education in London yesterday, she said: "We are not seeking to force anyone to change their admissions against their will. We welcome any type of school — grammar, comprehensive, specialist or whatever — which is providing a good education for its pupils."

But at a subsequent press conference she appeared to have bowed to the Prime Minister's ruling that a switch to more grammar schools was desirable and inevitable.

The Government was thinking of allowing LEA schools to take more control of their admissions procedures instead of following orders from education authorities.

Mrs Shephard said it would be unlikely that legislation would be possible before an election, but proposals could become a manifesto pledge.

She denied there had been a rift with Mr Major. "We are absolutely united on this and all Government policies up to and including the manifesto."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Teachers, said the new policy would cause instability and lower the quality of intake of a large proportion of schools. "If it takes off to anything like the extent she anticipates, it will benefit a few people at the expense of the overwhelming majority."

Doug McAvooy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "I know of no better way of sowing alarm and despondency among parents."

Three from Royal Green Jackets could face life sentence



Justin Fowler, Geoff Pernel and Alan Ford file into the courtroom in Larnaca yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH TAGS IONANNIDES

Soldiers found guilty of killing

Riflemen had 'common intent' to attack tour guide in Cyprus

Owan Bowcott in Larnaca

THREE British riflemen serving in Cyprus were last night found to have taken part in the brutal abduction, rape and killing of a young Danish tour guide whose battered body was left on a remote building site.

Alan Ford, aged 27, Geoff Pernel, 24, and Justin Fowler, 28, of the Royal Green Jackets, had denied wilful manslaughter, kidnap, and conspiracy to rape but the court found they had "common intent".

Judge Takis Eliades said: "All the accused took an

active part in the assault to attain their illegal purpose. The accused formed the common intent to assault the victim and abduct her with the intent of rape."

He said Ford, from Sutton Coldfield, in the West Midlands, had taken part in the abduction of Louise Jensen, and had admitted hitting her several times with a spade.

Fowler, from Falmouth, in Cornwall, had tried to prove he did not take part in the assault and never had a positive role, the judge added. His claim that he was "an obedient dog" to the command of others was dismissed.

The judge said of Pernel, from Oldbury, in the West

Midlands: "We have never come across such detailed eloquence of a death rattle and the agony of a person [dying]. We can not conceive how it could have been given unless a person was near to the victim and had his senses concentrated on the events unfolding before his eyes."

The men are expected to be sentenced later today. The maximum sentence for manslaughter in Cyprus is life, but it can often mean no more than eight years in prison.

Ms Jensen, aged 23, from Denmark, was riding pillion passenger on her Cypriot boyfriend's motorcycle in the early hours of September 13, 1994, when the soldiers' car swerved into them.

She was dragged away, sexually assaulted and battered to death on a remote building site. Her body received 15

blows from a spade, crushing her skull.

The verdict followed a 14-hour sitting of Larnaca Assize Court. The 167-page summary was read out section by section in Greek by Judge Eliades, then translated into English by an interpreter.

Even though the men were arrested within an hour of the killing — spattered with Ms Jensen's blood — and later confessed to the kidnapping, the trial lasted nine months.

Much of the delay was due to appeals by the men's lawyers on the technical admissibility of evidence. The case has cost the Ministry of Defence hundreds of thousands of pounds in legal aid for the accused, and the final bill could reach £1 million if there is a further appeal.

Off-duty war, page 2

Hogg holding package bans sale of meat from older cattle

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

THE Government last night banned the sale of meat from cattle aged over 30 months as part of a holding operation to try to restore consumer confidence and save thousands of jobs in the beef industry.

Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, outlined the package, which is a temporary measure while more detailed measures are being worked out, in a statement to

MPs. He flies to Brussels today to meet Commissioner Fischer to prepare the ground for Monday's emergency meeting of the EU agriculture council.

Mr Hogg also announced the banning of feed stuffs for farm animals using mammalian meat and bonemeal, and extended controls to cover heads and lymph glands.

He admitted: "If the market remains depressed these measures are not going to be sufficient in themselves." He said the Government still believed that, provided the very tight

controls now in place were fully implemented, "the risks of eating British beef today are extremely small — or to use ordinary language: British beef is safe."

The ban on cattle over 30 months — whose meat goes into pies, sausages, and animal food — will remain until measures announced last week come into effect. Other measures were:

£1.5 million of British Government subsidy will be paid each week to help safeguard 3,000 jobs in the rendering industry, which disposes of the

waste from slaughterhouses; £250 million of European Union money to be made available each year to farmers for the slaughter (within 10 days of their birth) of young male calves from dairy herds, many of which used to be shipped abroad;

Livestock farmers will receive an extra £35 million in EU money in "final hea-dage payments" the ministry will send out next week.

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A man was awarded record damages against the police yesterday when a jury decided he had been assaulted and wrongly arrested

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BT on verge of creating £33bn world empire

Nicholas Barnister
Technology Editor

BRITISH Telecom is on the brink of merging with Cable & Wireless, its main rival in Britain, which would create a £33 billion worldwide telecommunications empire capable of outstripping its European and American competitors.

C & W, the owners of Mercury, confirmed last night that takeover talks had resumed. The original talks earlier this month had agreed on the structure of the deal but had failed on price.

As reports spread through the stock market that a deal would be announced today, the shares of both companies soared, valuing C & W at £11.3 billion and BT at £21.9 billion by the end of yesterday. BT, however, in a late statement, stressed that only exploratory talks were taking place.

Sir Iain Vallance, BT's chairman, has been seeking control of C & W to increase his group's presence in the Asia Pacific region through C & W's highly profitable 57 per cent stake in Hongkong Telecom.

But his attempts had been rebuffed by C & W's previous management team headed by chairman Lord Young, the former Conservative trade and industry secretary, and managing director James Ross.

BT made a new approach after the two men were asked to leave the group at the end of last year after a boardroom row over the way the group was run. The two sides had then agreed to merge and that Sir Iain and Sir Peter Bonfield, BT's new chief executive, would become chairman and chief executive of the new group.

It was also agreed that C & W, the smaller company, would bid for BT. If BT bid for

C & W it would have had to spend an extra £6 billion bidding for the minority stake in Hongkong Telecom. But industry sources said BT was not prepared to pay C & W's asking price of 600p a share.

City fund managers said last night they would be happy with a merger providing BT did not overpay. They said BT had consulted them about a renewed merger attempt.

They presumed that BT had already lined up buyers for the parts of C & W which would have to be sold for monopoly reasons — essentially the 80 per cent stake in Mercury Communications and the 50 per cent holding in the Mercury One-2-One mobile phone business.

BT wants to expand its overseas operations to offset increasingly tight price controls on its main British business. Last week Don Cruickshank, the director general of OfTel, indicated that the group would have to continue to cut prices until 2001.

City sources believe BT wants to agree a merger with C & W before July when it will have to decide whether to challenge the regulator's plans for price controls and new powers to clamp down on what Mr Cruickshank sees as anti-competitive practices.

BT, which makes annual profits of about £2.6 billion, still has about 80 per cent of Britain's telecom market. In recent years it has expanded overseas. It paid £2.7 billion for a 20 per cent stake in MCL, the second largest long-distance carrier in the United States.

C & W has a large international telecom network, with operations in Hong Kong and the Caribbean. But it failed to build Mercury into a company capable of challenging BT.

Notepad: Regulators ready for call, page 11



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Sketch

Hysteria gets over-cranked



Simon Hoggart

TORY MPs could not decide yesterday who to blame more for the beef crisis — the European Commission or Harriet Harman. Like a savage dog faced with a choice between a bone and a mangy cat, they turned first one way, then the other, and finally settled for snarling angrily at both.

The one body which appeared to be entirely blameless was the Government itself. Curiously, as Michael White reports elsewhere, the reviled Ron Davies, then Labour's agriculture spokesman, predicted all this would occur if government policies were pursued, back in 1989. But then Mr Davies is Old Labour, and so is ignored by both sides.

Angela Browning, the junior agriculture minister, was driven to gibberish by the iniquities of the commission and its advisers. "The decision-making of the scientists has not been made by scientific decision-making," she declared.

But somehow, even Conservatives find it hard to work up as much hatred for Europe as they do for Ms Harman. There is something about her self-assurance, her sensible costumes, and her smug little smile which makes them want to smash her in the face with their loathing.

"Disgraceful and quite irresponsible scare-mongering," said Richard Spring. "A hysterical reaction," said Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister. (He would look so much happier in a wig, sucking up to some sarcastic judge. He even stands in a lawyer's posture, flopped over the dispatch box, left foot twisted on top of the other.)

When his opposite number, Gavin Strang — he has been remarkably calm, even narcotic, throughout the crisis — suggested a "more constructive approach", Tories yelled

"Harman, Harman!" at him. Suggestions that ministers might be to blame in any way evinced a chorus of rage. "They are building up the scare, turning it into a party political brickbat campaign!" Mrs Browning raved. (A brickbat, incidentally, is a brick, not a bat. I am not sure one could say the same of Mrs Browning.)

She finally reached the belly when Labour's Elliot Morley suggested, quietly enough, that it might be an idea to take up quality assurance schemes. "Yet another Labour spokesman cannot resist the temptation to add his five-pennyworth of party politics! It's a disgrace!" I suspect a doctor should take a look at Mrs Browning's spinal cord, pronto.

But she was sweet reason compared to the Prime Minister. What do they put in the All-Day Breakfast he likes to eat — dangerously often — in motorway service stations?

Mr Blair wanted his reaction to Labour's plan for restoring confidence in beef. This was enough to make the Tory backbenchers spume with fury.

"Speak for Brussels!" they yelled, causing Betty Boothroyd to shut them up, though in my experience Mr Blair can look after himself. He just goes on repeating what he's said until the TV has got what they call "a clean feed". (That is, so there is no scrapie in his mechanically-recovered sound bites.)

Mr Major produced a proportionate response — or what would have been proportionate to a suggestion that diseased toads should be added to the food chain. He denounced the Labour plan thus: "It's a mixture of motherhood, action that is already being taken, and largely misses many of the matters that need to be dealt with."

I suppose "motherhood" was short for "motherhood and apple pie" and translates as "things we all agree on anyway." But who can tell what is passing through those spongy synapses these days?

Mr Blair called his response "pathectic" and Mr Major called the Labour paper "pathectic" too.

But of course, unlike Ms Harman, there was nothing remotely party political about what Mr Major said.



Louise Jensen and (below) boyfriend Michaelis Vassiliades

On a hot night in Cyprus two summers ago, three British riflemen were out on a crawl of the bars. Louise Jensen was with her boyfriend on his motorbike.



Violently, their paths crossed. Owen Bowcott on a trial revealing events that cast a dark shadow over an island in the sun



Justin Fowler (right), a few hours before the killing in an Ayia Napa bar with Clark Bowker, who was a prosecution witness

No truce in off-duty war

EIGHTEEN months after the Danish tour guide Louise Jensen was bludgeoned to death with an army-issue spade, British squaddies are still hawking the beachside bars of Cyprus.

Her killing, fuelled by ferocious intakes of cheap alcohol and the brooding boredom which infects off-duty servicemen, has been portrayed as the sowing of ructions between Cyprus and the United Kingdom military bases. The drink-soaked cruelty of the night-time killing was in such contrast to the Club Med holiday atmosphere of the island that it drew broader conclusions from the grim sequence of events.

For many observers of the nine-month trial, it was not only the three, smartly turned out privates from the Royal Greenjackets who were in the dock at Larnaca Assize Court. At stake also was the reputation of the British Army and its presence in the Sovereign Base Areas at Akrotiri and Dhekelia.

The bases, which cover 99 square miles, were granted to Britain in 1960 as a condition of the colony obtaining its independence. Since then they have been a source of regular friction between locals and British military authorities. The 7,000 Cypriots who live in the enclaves, and those who pass through, are subject to British regulations and claim they are harassed by soldiers. But even by the chequered record of off-duty servicemen on the island, what happened in the early hours of September 13, 1994, stands apart. The abduction of Louise Jensen, a 23-year-old working in the resort of Ayia Napa, shocked Cyprus, which has been accustomed to a low crime rate.

Louise, raised in the town of Hirtshals in northern Denmark, wanted to see the world. After school and work as a nursing auxiliary, she secured a job with the Danish travel firm Friidresor.

Cyprus was her first foreign posting in February 1994. Within a few months she had acquired a boyfriend, a 21-year-old waiter, Michaelis Vassiliades, who worked at the Patio Mazeri restaurant in Ayia Napa.

It was the couple's bad luck that night to run into the three drunken riflemen. Privates Alan Ford, Justin Fowler and Geoff Pernel had spent the early evening swimming and had stopped in the town to quench their thirst.

At the Jasmine pub, Fowler and Pernel dined at least five pints each of John Smith ale, then moved on to tequilas. Ford preferred Jack Daniels whisky. In Ayia Napa's main square, nicknamed the Battlefield because it was the scene of so many punch-ups involving tourists, soldiers and locals, they carried on dancing and swearing.

In the Volcano pub Pernel told a group of English tourists that he wanted to "slap some women tonight".

Later they drove in Fowler's yellow Mini-Moke to an automated petrol station on the outskirts of town. In his statement, Fowler said that Pernel had announced he was "going to get himself a woman for the night". Ford added that it was a "good idea".

At that moment, Vassiliades rode up on his motorbike with Louise sitting behind him. The Mini-Moke pulled out ahead of them but swerved as they tried to overtake. It sent them sprawling. Louise, caught under the machine, at first thought it was a joke.

But the beach-buggy reversed towards them and



Police carry Louise Jensen's body to a hospital morgue

Pernel jumped out brandishing a shovel. Vassiliades was struck over the head and dragged off, crying for help. It was two days later that searchers found her battered body hidden under a pile of soil on a building site. Her face was so mutilated that she had to be identified by her jewellery.

Exactly what happened after she was snatched can only be reconstructed from the conflicting statements of the three men. Fowler claimed that after trying to have sex with her, he went back to his car and watched from the mirror as Ford and Pernel raped her. "I saw Pernel hit the woman with the

spade. About five or 10 minutes later they came back to the car." Fowler told Cypriot police. "I asked them where the woman was. Pernel said: 'Don't worry, it's sorted'. Ford said: 'We buried her'." In Ford's own account, he picked up the shovel and hit her. "It didn't work. As she shouted something in a foreign language, I hit her again and she slumped sideways." One of his colleagues — he wouldn't say who — snatched the shovel from him and carried on battering her body. Then they dragged her away and covered her with soil. On the way back to Dhekelia, splattered with blood, they were intercepted at a police roadblock.



Several days of the hearing were taken up with debates over the effect of alcohol. One defence psychiatrist maintained: "They did what they did because they were drunk, nothing else."

But it also emerged that Ford, now 27, from Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, had been facing a charge of assault after allegedly slapping a tourist's face with a glass a month before the killing.

Ford told the court: "It was not unusual for me to lose days or parts of days because of the amount of alcohol I often consumed."

Fowler, 28, of Falmouth, Cornwall, and Pernel, 24, of Oldbury, West Midlands, had evidently been on previous pub crawls.

The Ministry of Defence is determined to play down the image of jobless violence exposed up by the case. "All professions drink," explained an army press officer. "It's tenuous to link soldiers with alcohol. These three are not representative."

Whereas on active service, in Bosnia for example, soldiers are limited to a specific two cans of beer a night, there are no limits on alcoholic intake for servicemen off-duty in Cyprus.

Others within the defence community, such as the Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Family Association, which supports service personnel, are less relaxed about the mixture of single men and drink. The clashes between soldiers and civilians in Cyprus since the death of Louise Jensen reinforce their concern. In early 1995 another drunken Royal Greenjacket was involved in a hit-and-run crash, killing two Pakistani students on a motorcyle.

This year the newly arrived First Battalion, King's Regiment was banned from selected night-spots because of brawling. Within hours of the ban being lifted, they were at it again. One victim, a British holidaymaker, spent four days in hospital for the beating he received. The MoD, while admitting that clashes are running at one or two a month, insists soldiers are often innocent victims. "A lot of Cypriot youths like to vent their machismo on servicemen."

The case has provided the Committee Against British Police group, which campaigns for withdrawal of British troops from the island, with a fresh platform. While many Cypriots benefit from jobs the British presence brings, the death of Louise Jensen has undoubtedly jolted the relationship between the UK and Cyprus.

First night

Trivial pursuit

Michael Billington

Harry and Me

Royal Court, London

HERE is obviously a sharp and witty satire to be written about television. Unfortunately Nigel Williams's *Harry and Me* is not it. It is a desperately strenuous affair that takes an elaborately constructed hammer to crack some very small nuts.

We are in the underpopulated office of an ailing chat show. In fact we only meet three characters: Ray, the control-freak producer, Tracy, his long-suffering researcher, and the show's debilitated host, Harry Harrod. The action consists of the frenzied attempts by Ray and Tracy to rescue the programme's next edition by keeping the suicidal Harry on the straight and narrow and by contacting a defuncting guest, a pop star who has never had a hit.

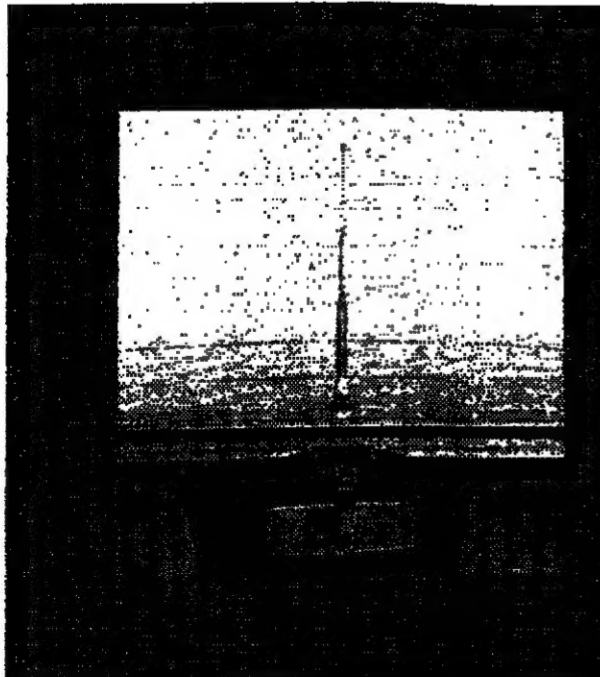
Ray spends all his time juggling phone calls and working himself into rages. Meanwhile Tracy is driven to do phone impersonations of people from every region and nationality in order to get through to the pop star and his agent. Williams's message is clear enough — that TV people live in a goldfish bowl world of their own and are so busy constructing an artificial reality

that they are in danger of becoming morally lobotomised. But in attacking the devouring obsessiveness of TV, Williams himself falls victim to it: he constantly stresses that mountainous energy expended on a totally trivial chat show, we are driven to ask why we ourselves should become interested in it.

In fact, the bottom end of the market is too soft a target: Williams's play would have far more pungency if he showed how even the best programmes can eat people alive. By focusing so narrowly on a falling chat show, he ignores all the big issues such as the politics, the finances and the ratings mania of a rapidly-changing industry.

In James Macdonald's production the actors work overtime to keep the balls in the air. Ron Cook makes the most of Ray's bursts of scatological fury, and Sheila Hancock as Tracy does a series of dazzling vocal impressions while still making you believe in the woman's innate sadness. Dudley Sutton also looks in to good effect as the bemused, alcoholic host. It is not the actors' fault that the play has an air of desperation and tells you less about the madness of a television than half an hour of *The Larry Sanders Show*.

This review appeared in some editions of yesterday's paper.



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Hockney passes time test with 37-page fax for college girl's A-level project

Edward Pilkington on telephonic art



Sarah Richards, above, whose message to Hockney, below, resulted in the faxed artwork. Breakfast with Stanley in Malibu, which Sarah and schoolfriends are seen assembling at Truro College, Cornwall, left.



SHE wasn't really expecting anything. At best, a few scribbled words from David Hockney to include in her mock A-level art project. So Sarah Richards, aged 18, was overjoyed when a fax from the painter began spilling out of a machine in the art department at Truro College, Cornwall.

Her face lit up, then — as each page was followed by another — her chin dropped to the floor. She had had the idea of contacting the artist when she visited the 1983 gallery in Saki's Mill, Bradford, which houses Hockney works, and spotted his Californian fax number on an exhibit.

Back home in Cornwall she sent him a message requesting a small contribution towards an essay she was writing about his work. Receiving no response, she wired a second fax in which had the audacity to set him a time limit. "I asked him to reply by the 27th as it would help my studies. As it happened, he

replied straight away — he obviously works better to a deadline. On Tuesday Hockney's fax began to arrive, spewing paper all over the art room floor. There were 37 pages — 36 of which were pieces of a drawing measuring 3ft by 4ft — though two other sections had gone missing en route.

The 37th page was a note with instructions on how to put the picture together. "Dear Sarah, I am sending you some large fax pictures. I hope they give you pleasure — David H.," it said. The drawing, Breakfast with Stanley in Malibu, depicts Hockney's view from his studio overlooking the sea. Stanley is one of

his two much loved and oft portrayed dachshunds. The medium of the fax became a preoccupation with Hockney in 1988. He calls it a "hearing phone for the deaf", a reference to his own deteriorating hearing. A few years ago he said the fax would overcome censorship and herald the end of totalitarianism.

Jonathan Silver, who runs the 1983 Gallery, commenting on his response to Sarah, said: "It's typical of David — he is very humane and charming." He recalled how he first met Hockney more than 30 years ago when he was 13 and Hockney 25. "David had just won a student award at the Royal

College of Art and I wrote to ask him to design a cover for my class magazine at Bradford Grammar. He sent an original gouache by post." That painting still hangs on the school's wall. Meanwhile, Truro College is planning to show Sarah Richards's fax at an open day this weekend.

MPs rebuke security chiefs over CIA agent's betrayal

MPs concerned at damage done to British interests by US spy

Richard Norton-Taylor
THE heads of MI5 and MI6 were severely rebuked yesterday by a committee of senior parliamentarians for failing to investigate potentially serious damage done to British interests by the CIA agent, Aldrich Ames, and failing to warn ministers about the implications of his eight years' spying for Moscow.

parliamentary Intelligence and Security Committee, said it was still not known whether Ames placed British lives at risk more than two years after he was arrested. The committee, in its first annual report, expressed serious concern "over the extent of damage done to British interests by [Ames's] traitorous activities, and the extent to which 'tainted' intelligence information ... may have reached British ministers". Referring to evidence to the

committee given by Stella Rimington, head of MI5, it said it was concerned "at what appear to be significant lapses in the procedures for the briefing of ministers on an area of such considerable security importance". The committee, which includes four former Tory ministers, said that MI6, which works closely with the CIA, did not begin investigating until November last year the extent to which "tainted intelligence" — information provided by sources compromised by Ames to the Russians — damaged British interests. It also criticised the CIA for

not passing on relevant information to MI6. Referring to evidence from David Spedding, the Chief of MI6, the committee said: "It is unacceptable that two years after a major betrayal, the Americans have still not provided the UK agencies with a detailed read-out of the damage Ames did to UK assets and agents". It added: "As an illustration of the massive scale of that betrayal, [MI6] assess that on one particular instance in June 1985, at the very start of his 10 years of treachery, Ames handed over to the Russians the identities of 13 CIA agents, of whom nine were ex-

posed and three were imprisoned". The committee's report was completed last December but released only yesterday after John Major approved its publication with some passages excised. In a letter to Mr King, Mr Major said he "feels satisfied that ministers were adequately briefed", and "damage done to United King-

dom interests were not great". The committee made it plain yesterday that it does not share the Prime Minister's confidence. It said the Ames case raised the central question of how busy ministers are informed about what the security and intelligence agencies are up to. It added it was not satisfied with the way ministers

are briefed about the agencies' activities. Its criticism comes two years after Sir Robin Butler, the cabinet secretary, assured the Scott arms-to-Iraq inquiry that intelligence distribution to ministers had been improved. Mr King, a former Northern Ireland secretary, said that the committee was now

investigating the "effectiveness of MI5's response" to the breakdown in the IRA ceasefire, including warnings before the Docklands bomb in London on February 9. Intelligence and Security Committee, Annual Report 1995, HMSO, £5. MI5, The Security Service, Second Edition, HMSO, £8.50.

Feminists fall out over chores

Angella Johnson

AN unprecedented war of words has erupted among a group of feminist academics about whether the majority of women prefer to stay at home and look after children rather than go to work. Catherine Hakim, a senior research fellow at the London School of Economics, has caused uproar among feminists by saying that only a small number of women were truly career-minded. Challenging a long-standing feminist assumption that given a level playing field most women would opt to work, she claimed most did not want to work at all. "The unpalatable truth is that a substantial proportion of

women still sees homemaking as women's principal activity and income earning as men's principal activity in life," she wrote. Those who tried to combine career and family still accepted that the domestic chores were more their responsibility than their male partner's, whose role is to be the breadwinner. "The proportion of women who accept the homemaker role varies from half to two-thirds." Yesterday Dr Hakim was forced to defend her views, published in the British Journal of Sociology, after the publication of a critique signed by 11 eminent academics. She said that her paper, entitled Five myths on women's employment, showed that not all women had the same aims

and would not benefit from the same policies. "Most women still go along with the sexual division of labour, many actively preferring it and colluding with men, others not sufficiently inconvenienced by it to make a stand," she argued. She cited a survey in 1988 which showed that two-thirds of British men and women believe that being a housewife can be as fulfilling as paid work. Dr Hakim insisted that the female population is polarising into careerist women and home-centered women, often with conflicting interests. The former Employment Department sociologist admitted that her views had made her unpopular and that some academics had refused to talk to her.

The 11 sociologists have written a reply in which they criticise her for failing to document or give evidence for her arguments. "Hakim's feminist is, of course, a caricature," they say. The critique, also published in the British Journal of Sociology, further accused Dr Hakim of not taking into account economic influences. Irene Bruegel, of the University of the South Bank in London, said: "The myths about women and work are all of her making." Another critic, Ceridwen Roberts, director of the Family Policies Study Centre, said: "I regret that Catherine has made a media fight over what is an academic discussion. In the process the subtleties of the debate are now getting lost."

EU 'wastes £800m a year' on subsidies to tobacco farmers

Chris Millill Medical Correspondent

SUBSIDIES worth £800 million a year paid by the European Union to keep tobacco farmers in work are an economic nonsense, a misuse of public funds and encourage the dumping of a lethal product on poor countries, doctors said yesterday. A report in the British Medical Journal argued it would be cheaper to pay £3,000 a year directly to tobacco farm-

ers in southern Europe and Greece to do nothing than to continue with the subsidy system. The researchers said that 1,000 million Ecu (£800 million) a year — the equivalent of £2 million a day — is being spent to produce a crop worth £75 million. But nobody wants the European tobacco, so it is effectively given away to North Africa, Russia and eastern European countries. Luk Jossens, of the International Union Against Cancer, and Martin Raw, of King's College Medical School, Lon-

don, said reforms introduced to the system in 1982 have had little effect, and point out that the EU spends just £1.2 million a year on smoking prevention. Although production has dropped since 1981, 329,000 tonnes of low grade tobacco leaf were grown by European farmers in 1994, predominantly in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece. Tobacco subsidies account for 3.1 per cent of the Common Agricultural Policy. The report says that aside from moral questions, the sys-

tem is a hugely inefficient way of protecting farmers' jobs. In Greece, £106 million was spent in 1994 to produce a crop worth £2 million. Dr Raw, a senior lecturer in public health, said that on average each tobacco farmer received £5,000 a year from the EU, but after the expense of growing the crop was left with a profit of £3,000. "It would be cheaper, and certainly better for health, simply to send each of them £3,000 a year for doing nothing."



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The mixture of Collins and Tarantino is heady, however much one wants to question it, and these moderns think and speak like the post-Freudians they cannot fail to be.
Review page 13

4 BRITAIN

Hairdresser who claimed that officers assaulted, abused and wrongly arrested him reaps £220,000 award in civil suit

Police must pay record damages

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A MAN was awarded record damages of £220,000 against the police yesterday after a jury decided he had been assaulted and wrongly arrested.

The sum more than doubles the previous record award by a jury in a civil action against the police.

In a separate case yesterday, against other officers from the same station, a man was awarded damages of £84,000.

In the first case Kenneth Hsu, aged 32, a hairdresser and landlord of Streatham, south London, claimed at Central London county court that he was violently assaulted and abused by police who arrested him outside his home in July 1982.

Officers from Streatham police station had gone to Mr Hsu's home in connection with a dispute involving a tenant.

He was arrested when he declined to let them into his house without a warrant.

The court was told that Mr Hsu was manhandled into a police van, where he was punched, kicked, hit with keys across his head and used as a foot-stool by the officers. He was held at the station but eventually released without charge.

One officer thanked him for the overtime payment he would get, and another told him he was "the first Chinky" he had arrested, the court heard.

He was later treated at King's College hospital, where he was found to have extensive bruising to his back and kidneys and was passing blood.

He has since suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, which was accepted by both sides' medical experts.

Mr Hsu complained to the Police Complaints Authority but no action was taken against the officers, who all denied his claims. He then brought the civil action.

Before Judge Quentin Ed-

wards QC, the jury of five women and three men awarded £220,000 compensatory damages and £200,000 exemplary damages. The judge stayed payment of damages beyond £50,000 pending appeal.

Mr Hsu's barrister, Ben Emerson, had told the jurors: "The officers involved in this case are guilty of a cynical, deliberate and malicious fabrication."

He asked the jurors "to send a clear message to the commissioner that the public will no longer tolerate lying, bullying, perjury and racism by officers of the Metropolitan police."

"In this case a small award of damages would be regarded as a victory by the officers involved. Even a moderately large award would be greeted with relief at Streatham police station."

"It is only if you award damages on an unprecedented scale that you can be sure the commissioner will be told of it and will act on it."

After the case, Mr Hsu, who came to England from Hong Kong nine years ago, said: "Finally I've got justice. I still don't understand why the police did what they did."

His solicitor, Sadiq Khan, said the police should launch an inquiry into the incident.

"By awarding those damages, the jury clearly wanted to make an example of the officers."

Last night, a Scotland Yard spokeswoman said an appeal would be lodged against the award. No disciplinary action had been taken against any officers involved nor would it be taken.

In the second case in the same court, Terence Winyard, aged 27, was awarded £84,000 damages against the Metropolitan police. The court was told that officers from the Streatham station had arrested Mr Winyard in August 1981, assaulted him and maliciously charged him with assault and possession of an offensive weapon.

He was acquitted by Camberwell Green magistrates, south London, in April 1982.



Kenneth Hsu... 'kicked, punched and used as foot-stool', he suffered post-traumatic stress disorder after arrest at his home PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

Adoption bill to answer child's needs

Ministers intend to clear away barrier of 'political correctness'

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

ADOPTION should be seen as the only practical and long-term answer to the needs of many children, ministers said yesterday as they published a bill to overhaul adoption processes and guidance to clear the "roadblock of political correctness".

Together, the measures represent a concerted attempt to rehabilitate adoption as a common and positive recourse after almost 30 years of decline.

Ministers stressed, how-

ever, that they were not intending to force single mothers-to-be to hand over their babies rather than keep them or opt for abortion.

John Bowis, junior health minister, said: "There is no question of any mother, single or married, being pressured to give up a child."

The Adoption Bill is set out in a consultation document, Adoption - A Service for Children, which is open for comment until June 28. The bill lays down a new procedure for adoption; a welfare checklist against which adoption agencies and courts must assess a child's interests; a duty on councils to publicise

their adoption services and encourage more families - especially from ethnic communities - to consider adoption; a complaints system, including independent assessment; and easier procedures to allow step and foster-parents to adopt.

About one in two adoptions is now by step-parents, the total number of adoptions having fallen from almost 25,000 in England and Wales in 1968 to fewer than 7,000 in 1988.

The bill allows a court to order that a child be placed for adoption without consent of the parent or guardian as long as it is satisfied it is in the child's best interests.

The guidance, sent to local authorities last month by Herbert Laming, chief inspector of the Social Services In-

spectorate, says prospective adoptive parents should not be ruled out on grounds of age.

The guidance also says that while same-race placements "may well be most likely to best meet a child's needs", there should be no bar on mixed-race placements.

Mr Laming says: "It is a matter of concern that too often cases are drawn to the attention of the (health) department about unfair and distressing experiences of some prospective adopters, who have felt that they have been dealt with in an insensitive manner."

The guidance reasserts the Government's ban on unmarried couples making joint adoption applications, stating married parents offer most children the best chance of

successful development. It says placement with a single adopter may exceptionally be considered, but that information about "all persons in the household" must be assessed.

Both the guidance and the bill make provision for a duty on local authorities to offer a service for people wishing to adopt from overseas.

Labour welcomed the bill, but Alan Milburn, shadow health minister, said: "The welfare of the child, not political ideology, has to be at the heart of Britain's adoption laws and practices."

Adoption: A Service for Children; Department of Health, PO Box 410, Wetherby LS23 7LN; free

Leader comment and Letters, page 8

Historic naval college saved

David Fairhall

THE University of Greenwich, south London, appears certain to take over the naval college there, but only as tenant of an independent trust charged with preserving Sir Christopher Wren's historic buildings.

The arrangements were announced yesterday by the Defence Secretary Michael Portillo, putting an end to fears that the 18th century Thameside site might be sold to a private developer. His decision follows the recommendations of an advisory group set up to consider the future of the college now the Royal Navy no longer needs it, and was welcomed yesterday by the university and the National Maritime Museum, which will share the buildings.

The main leaseholder from the MoD will be "an independent trust charged with preserving its architectural and historic integrity, with proper maintenance of the buildings and with ensuring public access", Mr Portillo said in answer to a parliamentary question.

The announcement was welcomed last night by the university's deputy vice-chancellor, John McWilliam.

The university, founded in 1890 as the Woolwich Polytechnic, operates 15 sites around south-east London. It plans to move its administrative headquarters and half its business school into the college buildings, along with an extension of the maritime museum in the park opposite and the Maritime Trust, which maintains the Cutty Sark clipper ship on display.

Mr McWilliam said the university hopes to take up residence in the autumn of 1997 as the navy moves out.

One part of the naval college will be converted by the Greenwich hospital charity to provide sheltered accommodation for retired seafarers and their wives or widows.

St Michael FOODS

crushed garlic, yoghurt, (there's more), pineapple juice and

It coats which are slowly roasted to perfection,

then flame seared, it's all

accompanied by sweet, a light mayonnaise, some Greek style yoghurt, a

hint of mint and a dash of How do we do it

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BEEF CRISIS: Britain begins its fightback as disaster threatens EU's common agricultural policy

Europe braces for slaughter

John Palmer in Turin, Michael White and Sarah Beesley

AS REPORTS of the free fall in beef prices throughout Europe reached Turin, EU governments braced themselves to provide massive financial aid from the Brussels budget to fund the slaughter of British cattle and try to shore up the collapsing European beef market.

with a package of measures including options for the slaughter of BSE-infected cattle. It continued in the House of Commons as Agriculture Minister Douglas Hogg made announcements designed to boost confidence in British beef at home and abroad. But consumers all over Europe have been demonstrating their lack of faith in the assurances of any government or EU official about the safety of beef, concerned that farming practices that led to the British crisis may have been adopted elsewhere.

Leading processing firm to lay off 400

MORE than 400 workers at a leading meat processor are to be laid off temporarily and the company's three auction houses closed permanently because of the BSE crisis, it was revealed last night.

Laurencekirk in Scotland will close in the next few weeks to reduce costs after the drastic reduction in animals being sold. Confirming the lay-off at Scotch Premier Meat plants, it said that the past week had been "a total non-trading period, with stocks increasing as lorries return from the Continent, where they have been rejected".

Roberto Micelli, chairman of the butchers' section of the shopkeepers' association, Confarcenti, reported sales of beef down 40 per cent nationwide. In some areas, the fall had been as much as 80 per cent.

Germany's beef eating was estimated to have dropped 70 per cent in the first week. The German Meat Society, says that sales have now returned to around one third of normal levels. Germany yesterday ordered beef to carry official certificates proving it did not come from the UK or Switzerland.

Delhaize, one of the two biggest supermarket chains in Belgium, reported sales of beef down between 10 and 15 per cent since this time last week. Spanish beef consumption has fallen by about 25 per cent and the country's beef producers have countered with advertisements on television and in print promoting the quality and virtues of home produced beef.

Labour claims 1989 BSE export warning

Michael White Political Editor

THE Government was accused as long ago as 1989 of "selfishly and irresponsibly" permitting the export of meat and bone meal infected with scrapie and BSE without properly alerting Britain's trading partners to the dangers, it emerged last night.

ing of cattle at slaughter houses — a move rejected by the Thatcher government. Other recommendations include better enforcement of tougher abattoir rules, an independent Food Standards Agency and the creation of a quality assurance scheme "so that consumers know where their beef is coming from."

philly, was told by the then junior agriculture minister, Donald Thompson, an exporter and farmer, that other countries which bought British meat and bonemeal for animal feed were "well aware of the position here, they discuss it with us."



West London butcher Greg Sandrey puts organically produced beef on display yesterday, but despite the more natural production method, sales remained slow as the mad cow scare continued to deter customers.

Advertisement for JoJo Hip Chick. Features a large image of a chicken and text: "JoJo Hip Chick Uses Europe Online for funkier films, top tunes, clubbers opinions, happening hang outs and anything that's worth getting up to". Includes contact information for Europe Online.

Time to go Dutch at McDonald's

Gary Younge and Stuart Miller join dedicated burger eaters in Woolwich

FOR Graeme Simpson, aged 30, the wait at McDonald's in Woolwich, south London, was almost too much. "I was here at five past 11 this morning for when they got their delivery."

Doctors fear CJD victim may have had new strain

Vivek Chaudhary

A 29-year-old woman who died from Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) is believed to have had the new strain which is thought to be contracted from beef infected with BSE, doctors revealed yesterday.

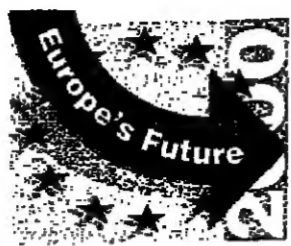
Revenge slyly infiltrates even our benign activities: it marks the jokes we tell and shadows the gifts we give. No wonder the shops are full of videos and novels with titles like Vendetta and Wild Justice.

Review page 10

Advertisement for Perrier water. Features the Perrier logo and text: "The Story of Perrier. It begins over one hundred million years ago when naturally carbonated water first bubbled through a spring at Vergèze, southern France." Includes a small portrait of Dr. Perrier.

Brit stereotypes belie pragmatism

Larry Elliott and Sarah Ryle look for Britain's true feelings about the EU in Leicester at the heart of England and uncover only contradictions and limp agnosticism, in the last of the series



TURIN knows a lot about British attitudes towards Europe. Maybe too much. The city was where Gazza and England made their painful exit from the 1990 World Cup. Five years earlier, its premier football team, Juventus, travelled to Brussels to play Liverpool in the 1985 European Cup final.

In crowd disturbances before the game, 39 fans died. As such, the venue for today's European Union inter-governmental conference would probably endorse one of the two stereotypical views of the average Brit's attitude to Europe — a beer-bellied football hooligan or John Bull T-shirt rampaging through the streets of Amsterdam or Dusseldorf. But when he grows up, the stereotype changes.

Out go the lager and the T-shirt, in come the cardigan, the pink gin and the Victor Med-drew-style fulmination against straight bananas, bureaucrats and the Bundesbank. If ever there was a week to test these images it has been this one. After all, the pro-European view of the mad cow fiasco is that, far from being a threat to the roast beef of Old England, Brussels has stepped in to safeguard consumers' interests. Opinion polls certainly indicate that Britain has a far more equivocal — perhaps pragmatic — approach to Europe than the stereotypes suggest, even though support tends to be stronger among those who visit the Dordogne than those on a Benidorm package holiday. All these contradictions are

on display in Leicester, a town twinned with Strasbourg, home of the European Parliament, since 1960. Leicester is not at the heart of EU affairs in the way its twin is, but it is the only British city to have won a Council of Europe Plaque of Honour in recognition of its efforts to forge European links. The city council is enthusiastic about the union, although council officers restrict their joy to comments about the EU's money and leave the political statements to their elected masters. "We are happy to have anything we can get from Europe," says Frazer Robson, the council's head of policy and development. His only expressed regret is that Leicester is unable to gain access to the social fund to help out its high unemployment. Leicester must be pretty

popular in the Euro-corridors of power, though, as it has been selected as a model for a commission survey into what European citizens want from their surroundings. It has also been chosen to test a road pricing scheme using EU funds. This ties in neatly with the city's commitment to all things green. It was Britain's first Environment City in 1990 and now boasts Europe's largest urban environmental charity, Enviroon. But a few minutes away from the council's high-rise buildings at the covered market — supposedly Europe's biggest — the perceptions are very different. "People here want Britain out of Europe," said Philip Sherwin, who has run Leicester's longest-established tripe stall for 23 years. Although his mind was more focused on the beef crisis and the impact on his business than on the

EU debate, he said his views on the Union pre-date the beef ban. "People want to put things right on this side of the water first. We get old people who can afford a couple of rashers of bacon and four sausages."

'Why not be a part of Europe? I came from Uganda but I'm British now'

for a week. They have a hard time. People cannot understand why this money gets spent in Europe. It upsets them."

Outside the sensitive meat-selling area, the view was not much different. Michael Blackburn runs a stall with his wife selling the sorts of

jackets and jeans that the city's student population (about 10 per cent of the total during term-time) love to buy. He said: "I'm not really for Europe. We don't see any of the money here. All the Europe money the council gets is ploughed into the areas where they get the votes."

He was talking about the areas with high unemployment, such as the Braunstone estate. But Nicola Ward, public relations executive for Leicester Promotions, warned that there was also underlying dissatisfaction in the city with the large Asian and black community. At 23.7 per cent of the population, Leicester's Asian community is the biggest of any city in Britain. Asians have, according to Mr Robson, prevented the city's traditional textile industry from dying an untimely death. Vibha Bhatt

runs a stall in the covered market when she is not looking after her elderly mother, one of the 15,500 Ugandan Asians who came to Leicester to escape Idi Amin in 1972. She was more concerned with the lack of jobs in Leicester than Britain's role in Europe. "Why not be a part of Europe?" it doesn't matter when I was 11, but I'm British now. It doesn't matter."

In Leicester, at least, it is too strong a word for Europe. Some for, some against, and, in true British fashion, plenty of don't knows.

Take market trader Rod Pratt, who cannot remember whether he voted for or against the Common Market in 1975. "People don't like it now, but I suppose I might have voted for it then and I'm not sure what I'd do now."

Leader comment, letters, page 6

ANC takes on finance portfolio in reshuffle

David Borensford in Johannesburg

THE African National Congress took a big step towards assuming control of the economy yesterday when a party member was appointed finance minister by President Nelson Mandela. The reshuffle was precipitated by the retirement of the non-political minister of finance, Chris Liebenberg, after only 18 months in office. He was replaced by the minister of trade and industry, Trevor Manuel, aged 40, a former political activist who was classified "Coloured" under apartheid. His appointment is a demonstration of Mr Mandela's confidence in the ANC's ability to deal with the business community. Mr Liebenberg and his predecessor Derek Keyes — both bankers — were appointed to reassure financial circles, particularly foreign investors, that the ANC was committed to economic rectitude. The South African Chamber of Business (Sachob) expressed nervousness about the timing of Mr Liebenberg's resignation. "The decision comes at an unfortunate time in South Africa's history, when the country is still trying to develop and build a record of fiscal discipline, financial stability and sound management of economy," its president,

Rudi Heine, said. He added that the fact that post-apartheid South Africa had gone through two ministers of finance since the all-race elections of 1994 would raise market concerns about the government's commitment to fiscal discipline. Announcing the reshuffle in parliament in Cape Town yesterday, Mr Mandela said the original understanding with Mr Liebenberg was that his was a relatively short appointment, "and that when he indicated that the moment had come for him to relinquish his job, we would not stand in his way."

Mr Liebenberg, aged 61, told MPs he had "total confidence" in the government. The National Party of F. W. de Klerk protested that the appointment of Mr Manuel breached an understanding with the ANC that the finance portfolio would be filled by a minister who was politically neutral. Mr Manuel has established a reputation for toughness in his dealings with the over-concentrated corporate sector and his attempts to dismantle trade barriers. Alec Irwin, the former deputy finance minister named yesterday as Mr Manuel's successor at trade and industry, is likely to follow his former spokesperson for Mr Mandela, Gill Marcus — who has established a formidable reputation in parliament as an economic watchdog — has become deputy minister of finance.

The outstanding intellectual in the cabinet, Dr Pallo Jordan, was dismissed, his posts and telecommunications portfolio going to Jay Naidoo, the minister with responsibility for the country's reconstruction and development programme. The RDP portfolio, which has been criticised as superfluous, has been abolished. More surprising than any of the ministerial changes has been Mr Mandela's failure to use his first cabinet reshuffle to get rid of other ministers, such as Alfred Nzo, in foreign affairs, whose performance in office has been widely regarded as abysmal. Meanwhile the ANC chalked up something of a triumph yesterday when Inkatha backed off after threats to conduct police over the ban on carrying "traditional" weapons during political demonstrations. Inkatha leaders said they would defy the ban in country-wide protest marches to mark the anniversary of the slaughter of eight of their members outside ANC headquarters in Johannesburg in 1994. But most of the more than 6,000 demonstrators who turned out in Johannesburg — one of the biggest Inkatha gatherings seen in the commercial capital — carried only wooden sticks and shields.



Defiant warrior... Though most demonstrating Zulus left their spears at home yesterday, a few challenged the government ban on dangerous weapons as they marched through Johannesburg. PHOTOGRAPH BY ADL BRADLOW

Sudan to face sanctions if it fails to give up suspects

Ian Black, Diplomatic Editor

SUDAN, isolated because of alleged support for terrorism, is about to face United Nations sanctions for refusing to hand over men implicated in the attempted assassination of the Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. Members of the UN Security Council are negotiating a resolution, expected next week, which diplomats say is likely to involve the withdrawal of foreign ambassadors from Khartoum. Economic measures against the country, Africa's largest and one of the world's poorest, have been ruled out, partly because Egypt would suffer from sanctions applied to Sudan. Gunmen, believed to be members of the fundamentalist Egyptian Jihad group, attacked President Mubarak's motorcade last June in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, where he was attending a summit of the Organisation of African Unity. Ethiopia accused Sudan of harbouring and helping the men to be assassins and later produced evidence — corroborated by Western intelligence agencies — proving Khartoum's complicity. But the material has not been made public. "People do need to be convinced, and there is an absence of hard information available to the Security Council," one diplomat said. Sudan denies harbouring terrorists and has said it has no evidence that the three suspects are anywhere within its borders. Western sources say intercepted Sudanese communications show this to be a lie. On January 31, UN resolution 1044 gave Sudan 60 days to extradite the three and stop support for "terrorism". The period expires on Monday. Sudan is to be held under a neutral caretaker administration, writes *Arshad Mahmud in Dhaka*. It paves the way for the embattled prime minister, Khaldia Zia, to step down.

Warm beer penalty
Gunmen shot dead a South African bartender because he served them warm beer, police said yesterday. A police spokesman said the two men's shots in a shebeen, an unlicensed bar, in central Johannesburg also injured another customer. — Reuter.

Kingmaker dies
Shin Kanemaru, a former deputy prime minister and one of Japan's most powerful politicians died yesterday, aged 82. Kanemaru, who helped put four prime ministers in office, was regarded as the consummate backroom politician and kingmaker. — AP. *Obituary, page 17*

Ring cycle
An engagement ring dropped into the sea off Sweden almost two years ago was returned to its owner after it was found in a mussel in a catch of shellfish. The fisherman traced the owner because his fiancée's name was engraved on the ring. — Reuter.

Israelis round up students

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

PALESTINIAN youths stoned Israeli and Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) forces near the West Bank town of Ramallah yesterday after hundreds of students were arrested at the territory's most prestigious university. The students and other Palestinians were held in a series of pre-dawn raids at and around Bir Zeit university, outside Ramallah. Israeli paratroopers burst into university dormitories and private apartments in Bir Zeit and other nearby villages. The raids involved large numbers of troops, paramilitary police, and members of the Shin Bet secret service. In all, 376 Palestinians were picked up. Many were taken initially to a school playground, while the Bir Zeit area was placed under curfew and all traffic stopped. The biggest search and arrest operation since Israel

and the PLO signed their self-rule peace accord in 1993 drew angry reactions from Palestinian leaders and students. "This is a display of Israeli brutality and lack of respect for the peace accord they signed with the PLO," said Frej al-Khouri, who heads the Palestinian team on one of the joint committees set up to oversee the West Bank power-sharing arrangement. Major-General Gabi Ofir, commander of the West Bank occupation forces, said 57 places were raided. The aim was to round up members and supporters of the Islamist movement Hamas, and to find students from the Gaza Strip, who are currently banned from the West Bank. Israel sealed its borders with both territories, and blockaded several West Bank towns and villages, after the four Islamist suicide bombings, which killed 82 people. Gen Ofir said: "In the end, a few will remain under arrest, the Gazans will be sent

to Gaza, and the university will continue operating." But most Palestinians believe the main purpose of the closure policy is to punish the 2 million residents of the Gaza Strip and to force Yasser Arafat's self-rule authority to set its forces against the Islamist groups. The Israeli prime minister, Shimon Peres, wants to show the electorate before the May 29 election that he will take tough measures against the Islamists. Mr Peres, who had a huge lead in the polls until the bombings, is now neck and neck with his rightwing rival, Binyamin Netanyahu. The Israeli security services were censured yesterday by the official inquiry into the assassination of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. The panel headed by a former supreme court president, Meir Shamgar, said the Shin Bet leadership had failed to take seriously warnings that a Jewish extremist might try to kill Rabin.

News in brief

France expels west African asylum seekers

FRANCE yesterday expelled more than 50 west African asylum seekers rounded up after occupying a Paris church and gymnasium in a protest aimed at winning permanent residence. The Africans won support from civil rights campaigners and the opposition Socialists, who oppose government plans to tighten immigration laws, because, they say, they are already too tough. The Gaullist-led government claimed that the occupants were publicity stunts. A court initially ordered

the release of 38 of the Africans because their eviction from the church was illegal. But an appeals court later overturned the ruling and ordered them re-arrested. The interior minister, Jean-Louis Debré, said he took "total responsibility" for the police actions and insisted that the arrests had been completely legal. France has at least four million legal foreign residents and up to a million more are believed to be in the country illegally. — Reuter.

Hostage taker overpowered

Commandos overpowered one of Germany's most notorious criminals yesterday, freeing seven relatives he had threatened to kill during a 24-hour ordeal in the village of Leienkaul, near Koblenz. Norbert Hauger, aged 45, spent 11 years in jail for spectacular bank robberies and kidnappings in the 1970s and 1980s. Local newspapers said he returned to take revenge on his ex-wife, saying she had informed on him. — Reuter.

Algerian manhunt

Algerian security forces yesterday sealed off the Islamist stronghold of Medea where seven French Trappist monks were kidnapped by suspected Muslim militants. There has been no trace of the monks since they were seized on Wednesday. — Reuter.

Jaruzelski in dock

Court proceedings began yesterday against Poland's former military strongman, Wojciech Jaruzelski, for the killing of 44 demonstrators by security forces during food protests in 1970. — Reuter.

Chechens hit

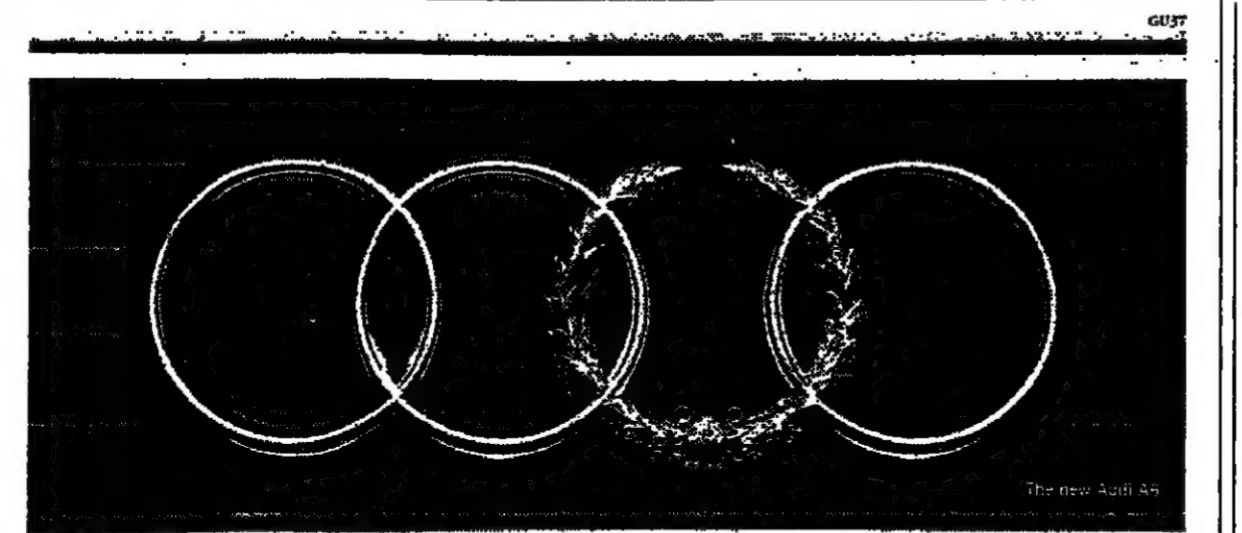
Russian forces attacked Chechen separatists on three fronts yesterday, trying to seize control of territory in the breakaway region before President Boris Yeltsin unveils a peace plan on Sunday. — Reuter.

Tappers told to get off line

ABOUT 100,000 French telephone lines are illegally tapped each year and state agencies may be behind much of the eavesdropping, an official panel said yesterday. Curbs imposed on wiretapping by official bodies may have tempted them to farm their illegal bugging out to private firms, the independent National Commission for the Control of Security Interceptions said. The commission, created in 1991 after a series of scandals, said bugging still went far beyond the 15,000 taps legally authorised each year. "New measures are essential to curb illegal wiretaps, which are an increasing danger for the private lives of citizens, the activities of numerous professions and even the proper functioning of a state of law," the report said. — Reuter.

Russia to show more looted art

Russia showed off a drawing by Vincent van Gogh yesterday when the Hermitage museum announced a new exhibition of art seized from Nazi Germany. Van Gogh's *Boats on the Beach at Saintes-Maries* and works by the 19th century artists Paul Signac and Honore Daumier were brought out of obscurity to publicise the exhibition, which opens in December. The van Gogh, Signac's *Boats in a Harbour* and Daumier's *Gare Saint-Lazare* will be among 89 drawings, including works by Francisco Goya and Paul Cézanne, to make up the show. Two exhibitions last year were the first to display Russia's treasures looted from Germany at the end of the second world war. — Reuter.



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Dragons and demons haunt US-China links



Other words

John Gittings

THE dark cloud of Chinese warplanes and missiles has lifted from the Taiwan Strait, but Beijing's lightning now flashes in a different direction. The target is no longer the "separatist" Taiwanese president, Lee Teng-hui. It is the "superpower" United States which, says Beijing, is plotting to plunge the Chinese people into a further "abyss of suffering".

its current issue. A surging China, it proclaims over a picture of Chinese tanks, is about to become one of the world's great powers. "But will the reborn China be a friend to the West — or a daunting foe?"

The Sino-US understanding reached in the 1970s and 1980s — though based on a now defunct anti-Soviet strategic rationale — was apparently cemented by mutual economic interest and a shared view of east Asia's leading role in the 21st century.

But are we seeing the birth of an inescapable power conflict between the world's only superpower and the world's fastest rising half-superpower. Or is this just another spat in a long love-hate relationship?

Yesterday the US assistant secretary of state, Winston Lord, a former ambassador to China, spoke of building a more constructive relationship. He said the administration would fight to renew China's Most Favoured Nation trade status, against congressional opposition.

Is this a new power conflict or a spat in a long love-hate relationship?

But Mr Lord and colleagues are the target of fierce conservative criticism of US "craven diplomacy". The critics' check-list includes the suspected (though not proven) sale of Chinese components to help Pakistan make nuclear weapons and Iran make poison gas; human rights violations; and "intellectual piracy".

more opaque. But a recent diplomatic signal to the US suggesting there would be no invasion of Taiwan appears to have enraged the generals. They demanded and obtained a public denial from the Chinese foreign ministry spokesman.

The US also defines its global future with explicit reference to Asia. The regional picture is complicated by Japan and Russia, with Korea — perhaps even Indonesia — coming up from behind.



Shipping veil... America's First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and daughter Chelsea enter the Blue Mosque in Istanbul yesterday at the end of a three-day goodwill visit to Turkey. Mrs Clinton is to fly on to Greece. PHOTOGRAPH: DOUG MILLS

Villagers contact Briton's captors

Nick Cumming-Bruce in Siem Reap, Cambodia

THREE Cambodian villagers penetrated the forest hideout of the armed gang holding the British mine clearer Christopher Howes and his interpreter yesterday and hope to start talks today to try to secure their release.

The local men reached the camp on a mountain known as One Hundred Stoves Hill, about 25 miles north of the provincial capital Siem Reap in an area infiltrated by Khmer Rouge guerrillas, the deputy provincial governor, Hem Bun Heng, reported.

The villagers hoped to return today with details of what ransom or other conditions the kidnapers sought, he said. "I am 80 per cent optimistic they will negotiate."

They had no contact with the prisoners but told Mr Heng that Mr Howes, aged 36, a former Royal Engineers sapper working in western Cambodia for the Mines Advisory Group (MAG), a British charity, was in good health and had not been mistreated.

The gunmen, armed with automatic weapons and rocket launchers, initially asked for the equivalent of £2,600 for setting free the team of Cambodian mine clearers seized with Mr Howes on Tuesday. But

since releasing them the same day, they have made no ransom demands.

Cambodian officials and Western aid workers are still searching for clues to the identity of the gang, reportedly 35-strong. Some were dressed in civilian clothes, some in military uniforms and some in Khmer Rouge uniforms, the villagers reported.

Khmer Rouge guerrillas are known to have been moving through the district where Mr Howes was seized. But the north-western province, close to the border with Thailand and contested by rival factions for 20 years, still suffers from chronic banditry. Khmer Rouge defectors and renegade soldiers roam the area.

Earlier reports suggested the gunmen were Pol Pot's men, but aid workers say the small ransom demand may point instead to bandits. "They want the money, they don't seem to be interested in anything else," said one Western aid worker.

The gunmen matched Mr Howes, his team and two vehicles from a mine clearance site a few miles north of the ancient temples of Angkor Wat. But they later abandoned the vehicles.

MAG and another British de-mining agency, the Halo Trust, halted all operations for 48 hours yesterday in protest at the kidnapping.

Beijing takes bubbles out of Hong Kong's champagne do

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

A MID acrimonious public spat over the fate of democracy and the civil service in Hong Kong after 1997, Britain and China clashed behind closed doors yesterday on another prickly issue — throwing a party on handover night.

A third round of talks on the champagne ceremony with which Britain would like to quit its last important colony ended in Hong Kong with no hint of an agreement.

Determined to save Communist Party leaders from having to shake hands with Governor Chris Patten — vilified as a "whore" and a "tango dancer" — China wants to keep the big celebration until after the British have left. The ailing Deng Xiaoping, aged 91, has said he hopes to live long enough to visit Hong Kong in 1997.

"All I can say is that this is not an easy discussion and we are having difficulties," said

Hugh Davies, senior British representative on the Joint Liaison Group. "I hope very much that with goodwill on both sides we will be able to deliver a ceremony on June 30 1997 that satisfies the aspirations of Hong Kong and the international community."

China's hostility towards Mr Patten shows no sign of abating, however. After a brief pause during John Major's visit earlier this month, the polemics have resumed with gusto. The trigger was China's decision last weekend to begin the demolition of the legislature elected under Mr Patten's reforms.

In its place will be a body appointed by Beijing. Chinese officials have warned senior civil servants in Hong Kong that they must pledge allegiance to the untested legislature — expected to be in place as a shadow body before the end of the year — or lose their jobs.

Mr Patten described the move as a "black day for democracy". China dismissed the protests as a "big joke".

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The Guardian
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Premier Newspapers

For the ordinary Japanese people, Kanemaru came to epitomise the grubby world of money politics, especially when investigators in 1993 discovered gold bars under his bed.

Obituary page 10

Antisemitism
Sudan to be sanctioned... fails to give up suspects
s
Bulgaria labor empowered

Give and take in the EU
Compromise is not a bad word: it's the answer

THERE was a time when the 1996 European Union inter-governmental conference — the so-called Maastricht 2 which formally opens in Turin this morning — was seen as one of the epochal events in the remaking of modern Europe. Even in Britain, where grand European designs are widely treated with an often healthy scepticism, it is not long since the IGC was generally perceived as a political climax which would decisively shape the general election contest. Now that the year of deliberations is actually beginning, the importance of the IGC has diminished. Its range and resonance have narrowed. Other European debates not covered in the IGC — monetary union, agriculture reform and EU enlargement — have necessarily set it in a broader context of institutional evolution. The beef crisis has come as an explosive reminder that unforeseen events will shape the new Europe at least as powerfully as honed bureaucratic plans. To the Conservative Party, gathering in conference this weekend in Harrogate, the IGC must seem a lower order of problem right now. Nevertheless, the IGC is still hugely important and no amount of contextualising should be allowed to deflect from what is at stake. It must take decisions about a range of European issues — common foreign and security policy, common justice and home affairs policy, EU institutional reform and accountability — which are not only important in themselves, but which will inevitably impact upon domestic and international politics for years to come. The IGC will have to decide about big questions, like the structure of western European defence in the face of military challenges to Europe in general and member states individually. But it will also take decisions about smaller matters — like the adoption of a uniform proportional representation system for European Parliament elections, whose outcome will have powerful momentum for the British domestic debate about electoral reform generally. The principal problem for this IGC, and perhaps for all European Union negotiations always, is to find a workable and popular EU-wide compromise between necessary European cooperation and necessary national decision-making. The weakness of Maastricht was that the EU over-reached itself and lost popular legitimacy in the net contributor states (which are generally, like Britain, the richest, most powerful and most heavily populated). This IGC must redress that balance, which is one reason why the size of the Commission must be restricted and the rights of the large nations protected in other ways. Even so, Europe has to be a compromise. Compromise has become a dirty word in some parts of the debate. It is seen by integrationists as a sell-out to national rivalry and by nationalists as a capitulation to creeping federalism. But compromise should always be at the heart of the process. The European Union is itself a gigantic deal. Countries give to it in order to take from it. They win some and lose some on individual issues. In that sense the union is always in conflict with member states and they with it, and it is right to recognise this fact more openly, which is one of the strengths of the British debate. But it is equally clear that the powers of the strengthened union must be subject to legal scrutiny, parliamentary accountability and popular consent, something which our government has persistently failed both to acknowledge and foster. The European Union will always be a compromise and rightly so. But any approach which pretends that European cooperation is optional is as dishonest as one which claims the same about national sovereignty.

A child's rights are paramount
Yesterday's bill is not as bad as expected: intentionally so

OUR correspondence columns have been filled with angry letters. They were provoked by a report of a new bill in adoption procedures under which single mothers-to-be would be encouraged to hand over their babies for adoption. Indeed the health minister told our political correspondent that the aim of the new adoption bill would be "to promote adoption as an acceptable and valid alternative to abortion or the burden of bringing up an unwanted child." Hence the anger. A government which rejects state interference on economic issues was apparently intent on interfering in social affairs, perhaps even turning the clock back to a time when unmarried mothers handed over their children to adoption agencies to hush up family shame and stigma. It was not difficult to unearth a motive: unmarried mothers cost the state £9 billion in social security. What better wheeze than to transfer this cost to childless middle-income couples desperate to adopt and more than ready to bear the full cost of children. Yesterday, the draft bill simplifying current procedures was released. It is not nearly as neanderthal as speculation suggested. Indeed, the suspicion remains that ministers may have intentionally given their proposals a pre-publication political spin to appease their right wing. True it comes with guidance which suggests there should be no iron rules on age, race, or inter-country adoptions. But all of this makes sense. Barring people over 38 from adopting — as some agencies have done — is absurd. Family life starts much later for many couples today. It brings benefits too: parents who are more established in their jobs and more experienced. The guidance rightly notes the benefits of placing a child with a family of the same race, religion and culture but this is not always possible. Only the ideologically blind would insist on children being kept in "care" rather than being adopted by a family of mixed or different ethnic origin. Such iron rules needed to be abolished. Buried within the guidelines, there is even recognition that some children's needs may be best met by a single adoptive parent — when, for example, the person has been a successful long-term foster carer or has special skills. Adoption is in need of an overhaul. Adopted children still face too many difficulties as adults in discovering their family background as our readers have starkly set out in this month's letter columns. Inter-country adoptions need to be handled with care but are not barred by either the UN or European conventions on children. Childless couples deserve sympathy but the principle established by the 1975 Children Act — the child's interests remain paramount — needs reasserting. Children are not chattels. With more support, some poor families would not need to lose their children. But there are other children, lost in care, where adoption would give them stability, love and a chance to develop their full potential.

A fusion of rights and ecology
Brazil's Indians must have protection for their homelands

THE BESIEGED Indians of Brazil have to rely for justice on the Ministry of Justice. That may be a mistake since its Minister has just pushed through a decree which will make it much harder to defend their lands from rapacious loggers, ranchers and mining corporations. Minister Nelson Jobim arrives today in London eager to convince aid agency and NGO critics that presidential decree No. 1775 will protect the indigenous zones occupying 11 per cent of Brazil. The decree allows any interested party to challenge the boundaries of several hundred zones not yet formally registered. Mr Jobim says that if these were registered without this power being available, then vested interests could claim that their constitutional right had been violated. By coincidence Mr Jobim, before becoming minister, prepared a legal brief using this same argument on behalf of a state

government. The supreme court rejected his case: he would win now. A quarter of a million Brazilian Indians, scattered into some 180 different groups with almost as many languages, are already hanging on desperately. The constitutional argument is specious: their right to occupy the traditional lands takes precedence in the constitution over all other rights. What is needed is speedy registration and proper protection against illegal encroachment. The Indians preserve not only their own heritage but a vital ecosystem which is a precious but diminishing global resource. The EU and World Bank — and donor governments including Britain — agreed at the Rio Earth Summit to fund a new programme for Indian land protection. Oxford and other agencies are urging them to accept that this new decree makes nonsense of the Rio commitment — and to tell the minister.



Letters to the Editor

Between baby and minister

SOCIAL workers practising in the field of child care and adoption have been looking forward to the publication of the draft Adoption Bill. After a lengthy review following the 1989 Children Act, legislation to bring adoption law in line with other childcare provision is long overdue. I am therefore puzzled that John Bowls has chosen to launch an attack on the "political correctness" of social workers who, it could be inferred, may discourage single mothers from considering adoption. They are not the "political correctness" of babies who are adopted (Adoption law aims at single mothers, March 25). He says there will be a "crackdown" on any discrimination against adopters on the grounds of age, sex or race. This apparent new emphasis on adoption as a service for adults, rather than for children, is alarming. All of us working in the area of adoption understand only too well the need to understand prospective parents seeking adoption are those who can afford it. This seriously limits the potential for successful adoptions. May I suggest that the Government's plans to review current legislation to include the reassessment of this blatant discrimination. Marianne Grace, 75 Bower Lane, Easton Bray, Dunstable, Beds LU6 1RB.

THE health minister's proposals reinforce the myth that single parents are dysfunctional. The real cause of abortions is poverty. To suggest that we can reduce abortion by offering increased access to adoption is nonsensical. What should be offered is a comprehensive system of benefits to single parents. Name and address supplied. I found Ann Furedi's cavalier dismissal of adoption as an alternative to abortion (Letters, March 27) at best questionable and at worst offensive. The adoption choice is not "inducement": it is a non-violent option which frees women from a lifetime of unwanted parenthood or the risk of post-abortion trauma and safeguards the right of the child to a natural lifespan. So-called "illegitimacy" used to carry a stigma; now it seems that people who have been adopted are to be seen as missed abortions. I was adopted as a baby in 1949. I also experienced an "unwanted" pregnancy in the 1970s and gave the baby for adoption. I did not intend to spend my own self-interest during pregnancy; I continued my lifestyle in much the same way as before. I did not consider myself to be a mere "walking womb" either. At one time I visited I heard the baby's heartbeat and I was aware in a very immediate sense of someone pursuing a separate life inside my body. He had, and still has, his own autonomy. It sometimes think of the three generations scarcely known to each other: my first mother,

myself and my baby. I'm pleased that we could continue with our lives with minimal inconvenience to each other with adoptive families who loved and wanted us. Debby Wakeham, Cobden Street, Luton, Beds LU7. YOUR correspondent Tony May (Letters, March 25) highlights the frustration many people face in trying to gain access to papers detailing their earlier lives. This is shared by social workers and counsellors in post-adoption services. Unlike the Greater London Record Office, one body in this region allows our clients not only to inspect but to keep original papers over 40 years old. It fulfils its own archiving responsibilities by retaining photocopies. The satisfaction experienced by these clients has to be seen to be understood: what words can describe the emotion experienced by a 60-year-old woman on being given a paper her own, unknown, mother signed so long ago? Those of us privileged to witness the benefits of such a positive policy can only implore retentive authorities to develop a more humane approach. Workers in this area trust the forthcoming Adoption Bill will require all record holders to implement open-access policies. Pam Hodgkins, Service Co-ordinator, West Midlands Post-Adoption Service, 52 Newcombe Road, Birmingham B21 8DD.

meanwhile John Major should realise that taking a more understanding and co-operative line with his fellow heads of government — on beef and beyond — is likely to reap more dividends for Britain in the long run than petty recriminations. Given the EU's well-founded alarm, the Prime Minister's anger can only be synthetic — directed not at solving the actual problem but offered as a sacrifice to the family gods of nationalism on his back-benches. Santer and Major should think carefully today before dismissing the beef scare as an irrelevant to the serious business of Turin. After all, making the EU relevant to its citizens is supposed to be a key aim at the IGC — and its citizens are for once watching. Giles Radice MP, Chairman, Gulf War Research Foundation, 3014 Dent Place, NW #4E, Washington, DC 20007.

Beef on the menu in Turin

TODAY is a vital day for Europe's reputation in Britain. Ironically, Britain's beef crisis makes the opening of the long-awaited EU inter-governmental conference more important, not less. Instead of the event being the feared public turn-off, it suddenly affects the most basic ingredients of everyday life — the food on our plates and the fortunes of our farmers. The choice for Jacques Santer and the other 14 countries is whether to be technical and bureaucratic (to concentrate on questions of majority voting and foreign policy) or whether to be realistic and practical, and recognise that — for most Britons — the Turin Summit is in effect simply about cows and compensation. However, this provides a golden opportunity to reach out to the British people. If the Commission and our partners can make this concession to the fervent nature of public debate, they will have the power to do more for EU's reputation in Britain than any number of fine words on institutional reform or enlargement. If our partners want Britain and the British on board for the next two years of hard bargaining, they must take actions that clearly signal to the people — never mind the politicians — that they are wanted and valued in Europe. A firm statement on compensation, a new EU-resourced initiative to investigate meat safety and a pledge by Mr Santer to visit British farmers within the month would probably do the trick.

Points of order

THE decision of the "New" Labour Party to ballot all members on the election manifesto is an interesting one (Blair plans policy ballot, March 28). No doubt this move will continue to apply when "New" Labour is in government and all party members will be similarly balloted before manifesto commitments are ditched or modified. Lord and Lady of Swindon, House of Lords, London SW1A 0AA.

IN what is hopefully the final postscript to the discussion surrounding news access to BSkyB's coverage of the Bruce Light, let's see the record straight. ITN and the BBC did not "finally accept" BSkyB's formula, as David Elstein claims in his letter of last weekend. After months of insisting that it could only allow access to news programmes 72 hours after the event, it was BSkyB which accepted arguments put forward by ITN and the BBC to allow terrestrial viewers to see highlights on the same day as the event. Nigel Dacre, Editor, ITN News on ITV, 300 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8ZZ.

THE benefits of deregulation mean that this week I could not buy a rail ticket for my daughter from Maidstone to Taunton via Leeds: have been asked to pay £150 for a water meter in order to sprinkle my own lawn; have sat behind three nearly empty double-decker buses spewing foul black fumes in a traffic-choked town centre. Can anyone beat this record? Richard Finn, 52 Loose Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9UF.

IF the issue is "restoring public confidence" in beef rather than the assurance of public health, why does the Government not adopt the method it found so useful in the case of Windsor? Rename beef. D J Elliott, 22 Talbot Street, Southport PR8 1HP.



Heat of animal passions

IT is quite mad for the Charity Commissioners to rule that the RSPCA can campaign on behalf of animal welfare but must not object to the practices which destroy that welfare (Letters, March 28). Animal charities exist because many people are determined to reverse the process by which our society has drifted into treating animals abominably. Reversing that process will require the intervention of those who make money out of current arrangements. So it will indeed interfere with some human interests. Where, however, more serious dietary or medical interests are involved, these charities take it that we have to work to improve conditions — which is just what the RSPCA has always done. "Welfare" in fact would naturally include things like seeing to it that, if calves are slaughtered, they are slaughtered near home instead of being transported across Europe for 50 hours without food or rest. But that (we learn) is exactly one of the campaigns which the Commissioners object to. Another is the RSPCA's attack on the British-financed use of chimpanzees for experimentation in Holland. The simplest objection to this practice is that it takes chimpanzees from the wild, thus promoting wasteful hunting which brings their fragile and fragmented populations even closer to extinction. It is obscure how the concept of welfare as a mere softening of existing practice could be introduced into this industry, or into hunting. The upshot of the Commissioners' ruling can only be

that the RSPCA will collapse and be replaced by others which are willing to do what their supporters want. The notion that only human needs would ever be considered simply has no firm standing in contemporary morality. It expresses a quite unreal, arbitrary attempt to detach our species from the biosphere that it belongs to. Mary Middleley, 15 Collywood Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE2 3JP. THE Charity Commissioners' ruling was overdue. The RSPCA has long waged a campaign against my industry, the circus. It opposes the use of trained animals in circuses and has invested much money in media campaigns and anti-circus literature in preference to making any constructive attempt to promote better welfare for the animals. This is despite overtures from us to foster working relationships. David Hibbing, College Place, Kempdown, Brighton, Sussex BN2. THIS is only the most recent of a number of highly selective interpretations of charity law, brought about by the Commissioners giving in to pressure from wealthy lobbying organisations such as the Countryside Movement and the International Freedom Foundation. Charities must remain free to challenge the causes of suffering, not simply pick up the pieces after the damage is done. David Norman, 24c Forbury Road, London N16 6HS.

Truth vaccine

YOUR article (Nerve study boosts Gulf illness fight, March 27) incorrectly attributes to me the observation that chemical nerve agents could have reacted with the polio vaccine to damage the immune system. This comment was misinterpreted: my position is that this absence of antibodies to the polio vaccine is suggestive of an immune-system irregularity, rather than some direct action of the vaccine itself. This test for polio antibodies was conducted to determine if the veterans' immune systems were functioning in the same manner as in the general public — they are not. James J Tuttle II, Director, Gulf War Research Foundation, 3014 Dent Place, NW #4E, Washington, DC 20007.

A Country Diary

THE LAKE DISTRICT: Blown off Whiteside by a furious easterly gale that swept through the funnel of Gasgale Gill with the roar of a jet fighter we crept back down the side of the crags to seek more sheltered delights in the valley. Clutching at the rocks on the edge of the cliff in the very teeth of the gale, it had been difficult to keep our feet, let alone make progress, and our projected walk along the ridges would have to be left to another day. A pity, since the snow on Grassmoor on the other side of the gill looked especially inviting. Down in the leafy shade of Lanthwaite Wood the contrast with the fury on the heights could hardly have been more marked. Here was a gentle walk along a carpet of pine needles — not even a rustle in the towering trees but, once a splash of colour as a red squirrel crept along a branch and, later, a couple of rabbits hurrying across the track ahead. We came back by the Crummock Water shore, the waves now dashing as an angry wash on the beach, and drove towards the head of the

dale for the wonderful circumnavigation of Buttermere. Here, surely, is one of the best of the short easy walks of Lakeland — quickly changing views of some of the district's finest fells, towering up on all sides, stretches of woodland alive with bird-song, waterfalls spashing down from the crags, a beautiful path so close to the water and even on this day — sheltered from the gale on the heights — the lake itself a mirror of it. There was just one change from many previous rounds: the roof of the rock tunnel through which generations of walkers have passed was said to be unsafe and a new fellside path had been provided. Buttermere is always heart-stirringly beautiful, it is said the owner of the big house built the tunnel so that his contemplation of the perfect view from his windows would not be disturbed by the sight of the lower classes passing along his lakeshore meadows. So we crept along quietly on this lovely day. A HARRY GRIFFIN

Diary
Matthew Norman

In the Daily Mail comes thrilling news of Mandy Mandelson. The paper reports that, on Tuesday, the Harlepool member was involved in a fracas at the Almeida Theatre in Islington. Gosh. On a trip to Hog his splendid book to the faithful, Mandy was ambushed by Old Labour beasts protesting about immigration policy. Unpleasantness ensued. Mandy grabbed a banner before engaging in some reciprocal shoving. The Mail's pictures show him as a hero — and yes, I learn of frantic efforts to suppress them. Can this be true? According to photographer Paul Mattson, Mandy aide Benjamin Wegg-Prosser bombarded him with ever more hysterical phone calls, demanding he not sell them. Firmly in the Wedgehamian wing of New Labour ("I say Jeeves, after lunch at the Drones I'll be toodling down to Millbank Tower to work on Squeese Star's TV delivery"), Mr Wegg-Prosser saved news of a demand from Mandy himself until his final call at 11pm. That, at least, is Mr Mattson's story. However, given the near-religious intensity of Mandy's belief in press freedom, I find it very hard to believe.

An enchanting dialogue brightens the London Library's suggestions book. Could the library acquire "Jean Luc Hennig's magisterial history of the bottom, Rear View", writes a Mr Jeremy Faxman. A terse reply has now appeared from the Librarian: "Already possessed; see science/anatomy".

There are worrying signs that the Cypriot wine-waiver and occasional gossip, Mr George, may be developing irony. In his latest High Ball cocktail column in the Spectator, he first describes how he tried to poison Edward Heath while serving the old boy a Screwdriver at a Madam Tussauds party, and then recalls that he used to work in America for a certain Steve Smith. A relative of the Kennedys, Mr Smith "was unbeknownst to me a very heavy cocaine user", writes the gossip. The unbeknownst... to a man who spent months inside for bringing cocaine into Her Britannic Majesty's innermost realm? T-G would do well to remember the old journalistic adage (the one dearest to the Diary's heart) that teaches: "Irony does not work in newspapers."

Even worse than Irony, though, is puerility. Piers French writes from Cardiff enclosing a map of Oregon, and pointing out that there, between Beaverton to the north and Clackamas to the south, lies the charming town of Wankers Corner. This follows the recent item about the low-calorie American lager Wanker Lite, which its brewer expects to make money hand over fist.

One of South America's most talented villains is behind bars. One night last week, Edilber Guimaraes broke into a factory in Belo Horizonte, 280 miles north of Rio. He stopped briefly to sniff the glue he was pinching, and in doing so dislodged two cans. They fell to the floor and spilled their contents. When the police turned up the next day, they found Mr Guimaraes asleep and glued to the floor.

Three months ago, in the most remarkable instance of commercial precedence since Decca and the Beatles, Columbia publican Ken Gibson decided on "The Mad Cow Steak House" as his new restaurant's name. Reporting that it is now too late to change, because the signs and menus have been finished, Mr Gibson is showing the Dunkirk spirit the Diary so admires. "I don't believe anyone has stated that prime cooked steak is dangerous," he says. Those wishing to reward his defiance will find the Mad Cow Steak House in Falmouth's Cutty Sark pub.

Meanwhile, the French have been stamping the initials VP for Viande Française on their beef. How comforting for consumers. How much more comforting, however, were VP not also the recognised abbreviation for "vache folle", the French for "mad cow"?



The view over the last ridge

Commentary
Peter Preston

PEACE does not just break out any longer. Peace these days arrives at the end of a process. The peace and the process, forever conjoined like prunes and custard. I have been in Jerusalem this week, knee-deep in the process of Middle East reconciliation. But I kept thinking about Northern Ireland. The immediate echoes come thickly. Mounds of memory reeking far beyond any rational self-by-date. Israeli politicians, like the politicians of Ulster, rarely talk simply about the past. They begin with the future and many of them remain locked there.

Beyond that, of course, lies the wonder of religion. Let's tiptoe by on the other side of the street, trying to find a few more nourishing parallels.

Did you know that the Israeli army intelligence estimates of the South Lebanon strength of Hizbollah are uncannily the same as MI6's estimate of IRA strength? Did you know that Hamas — whence the bus bombers come — has a political wing and a semi-detached military wing it may or may not speak for? (Attention, Sheikh Gerry.) When you listen to Benny Begin, rising Likud star and son of his father, does the voice of Ian Paisley Junior rasp somewhere just off-stage? And what about the guns? We Brits may or may not talk whilst the IRA continues armed and dangerous. The moving finger of politics traces another wiggly line. Israel has no such taboos. It pens up the Palestinians, the good, the bad and the ugly, and lets them sweat in the "entity" they call home. Internment seems pallid stuff by such standards. The thought that a million and more Palestinians can be responsible, let alone equally responsible, for two terrible bombs comes devoid of logic on the ground. But this is Israel, this is election time and all this must be embraced as "part of the process". Here the differences grow starker. After the Aldwych and Canary Wharf bombs,

with their destruction and death, John Major suddenly tried harder. The end of the ceasefire was not, in fact, the end of due processing. It got the process timerservers off their bottoms. On this and almost every other count, you'd give the current Middle East show low marks and even lower expectations. It is, by common consent, as vulnerable as the next suicide explosion in a market square. GNN, poised to cover the last rites, deposes teams non-stop whenever and whenever a bang is heard. If Peres, the 73-year-old who has never won an election in his own right, thought that peace would carry him through at last, he stands cruelly disabused. Israel's present president, like his predecessor, talks openly about taking things more slowly, of not rushing to square the Syrian equation. Both of them seem to think that years can pass whilst Assad, of his own volition, comes to terms — leaving the struggle of Palestinian self-governing enclaves strewn impotent across the West Bank like the Transkei and Ciskei of old. Back to that one big bomb some time in the next two electoral months, a disaster waiting to happen, waiting to

destroy Labour and leave the non-peace and the non-process to a Likud which affects to believe that the current freeze can be held *sine die*.

It is a bleak prognosis. When Egypt's ambassador to Israel says eloquently (as he did at this week's International Press Institute conference) that the deal with Syria should be done now, that all the rattle about step-by-step is a snare, he has urgent reality to his words, if not political reality. If peace is inevitable, all talk about process grows ever thinner and ever more vulnerable.

You would reckon, by contrast, that Ulster is easy. Two sober Western governments on the same wavelength; a long break from violence making its own case; the same beneficent President of the USA involved somewhere

Could we go back to another 25 years of sporadic killing and grey endurance? You bet

over Cloud 9. Of course there are problems. But Belfast is a kindergarten besides Jerusalem's raucous comprehensive. Why, then, even as the odds against Middle East progress seem to lengthen by the day, do you still feel that the Jaffa Gate will find a durable peace sooner than the Falls Road? Perhaps perception — saw for one thing. Thinking Israelis, like thinking Egyptians, Jordanians and Palestinians, know that there is no alterna-

tive. What has been done already cannot be reversed. Nor can it be held in place indefinitely, whatever Likud says. The prospect of greater prosperity for all concerned lies just over the last ridge of the process, in a world where regions which can't compete get eaten by Asian tigers. The past was not an option. The status quo is not an option. Somehow, whatever the management, this show must judder down a single road.

Is that true of Ireland? Could we go back to another 25 years of sporadic killing and grey endurance? You bet. Dublin can do little to avoid it. This British Government, and probably any British Government, cannot force Ulster's Protestants to make concessions — and the leaders of that Unionist faith have crept over the long years of direct rule, to learn the discipline of making tough choices. They have a power of veto divorced from responsibility for progress. And they represent, bluntly, an electorate used to living on the subsidies London provides. Peace may be highly desirable. But is it, at root, a necessity? Will it change the voting habits of a Lifetime? Will it (don't laugh) see the Alliance vote bounce higher in the forum elections?

Bets may now be mordantly placed. What must be done, I think, will eventually be done. Without great penalty, probably won't happen. Can you see that through all the circumlocutions of the process-makers? Only when the necks of their trade, the Fervent perception — saw for one thing. Thinking Israelis, like thinking Egyptians, Jordanians and Palestinians, know that there is no alterna-

Why the Body Shop became my temple



Bel Littlejohn

KNOCK it off, guys. It's 20 years since the lovely, lovely Anita Roddick opened her very first Body Shop, and good luck to her. But Anita's always had her knockers. Now, instead of celebrating her great achievement in making Peppermint and Wine Gum Ankle Lotion available to the ordinary man and woman in the street, they are predictably slagging her off as the arch-enemy of all they hold dear.

But let's take a trip back in time to 1976. What would you have found in my bathroom in that long, hot summer? A bottle of Silvikrin, a bar of Camay, a tube of Macleous and not much else. But these days, I've had to put in a couple of extra shelves for my Body Shop products, including Jojoba and Smoked Salmon Lip Gel, Spinach Toothpaste, Lettuce Leaf Neck Scrub, Kettle and Artichoke Shower Foam, Camomile Tea Bottom Cleanser, Rum and Raisin Moisturising Spirit, Porridge Oats, Poached Egg and Fried Slice Face Mask, Kiwi-Fruit, Bar Soap, Blackroot and Bran Flakes Hairpray, Honeyed Beeswax and Calves' Liver Navel Rub, Ham Salad Kneecream, Pressed-Goldfish Facial Mask, Keir Hardie Yuuca Hair Conditioner, Asparagus and Snooty Hollandaise Eau de Toilette, Fruit-Gum Face Balm, Mule-Perseparation Lobe Massage Cream and Che Guevara Depilatory Lotion with Vitamin E.

Nuff said. Anita has changed the whole way I live and breathe. It's hard to imagine from the vantage point of today that we could ever have lived without Anita's brilliant Mau-Mau Kneecream, but somehow we managed. And not only that, but she has changed the way we think about the environment. For instance, before I saw Anita talking so bravely and passionately on our television screens, I would never have thought of becoming a fully fledged American Express cardholder, but that was what her advertisements did for me, and frankly I now never leave home without it.

But there's a lot more to Anita Roddick than mere products. She has changed ideas on personal hygiene. Let me tell you this. She has refused point-blank to stock a highly marketable all-over Mongo-Mongo shampoo and shower gel made out of the ear of South-East Australian mungo, and in so doing has ensured the continued sharp hearing of over 30,000 mungoes, for whom hearing aids with their attendant wires

and batteries might have proved prohibitively expensive. Her campaigns are now legendary. In all modesty, I have had a hand in one or two of them myself. I well remember Anita ringing me up one sunny morning just as I was scrapping off my Phlegm of Young Aristocrat Walnut Facial Scrub to ask me if I'd write her a notice to display in the front windows of Body Shops worldwide condemning the intransigent attitude of the British government to the plight of the Jojoba Indians of South America. "We have so much to learn from these people. But if only we'd give them the time," she said. I asked her what we could learn. "I really didn't have the time to ask them," she explained. "But I think they may possess the wisdom of the ancient secret of the perfect wash-and-go hand lotion."

In recent months, her campaign against the forward march of the global multinational and the increasing homogenisation of international merchandising by sticking up identical protest notices in her 1,300 outlets worldwide (1,421 by the end of this year, if her current multi-million-pound expansion runs according to plan). And that is where yours truly comes in. As is widely known, my public-relations company, Bel and Friends, has been associated with the Body Shop for a good many years now. In fact, I've written a fascinating autobiography, Busy Body (1992). Anita listed me as one of the five greatest influences on her life, along with Verdi, Rousseau, Harriet Harman, the Dalai Lama and Snoopy. Anyway, Anita and I, in society from my head to toe, together to come up with some truly fantastic ideas for celebrating the Body Shop as it enters — can you believe it? — its third decade.

We have managed to entice one or two very senior New Labour figures on board for a joint promotion. After all, both Anita and Tony share the same broad ideas on a stakeholder society and personal cleanliness. Have you ever seen Tony poorly shaven, or with so much as a blemish on his skin? Likewise, have you ever seen Anita snatching away a stake in society from a Jojoba Indian? Nuff said.

Let me tell you two of our exciting joint ventures. Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown — or Six O'Clock Shadow, as we affectionately call him — has agreed to celebrate Body Day by taking our All-Over Tangerine and Fizzy Lemonade Body Rub to the Despatch Box, while the lovely, lovely Peter Mandelson is all set for a six-month job-share with a member of the Vitamin B Shower Gel Tribe of East Africa. Happy Birthday, Anita — let's boogie!



A choice of evils

There is only one serious candidate to be Russia's next president: Mikhail Gorbachev. So why, asks Archie Brown, is he such an outside bet?

IN THE Russian presidential elections scheduled for June, current opinion polls suggest that the choice will be mainly between two candidates — the current incumbent, Boris Yeltsin, who will combine anti-Communist rhetoric with some concessions to the policies advocated by the Communists; and the Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov. The latter opposed the liberalising and democratising measures of Mikhail Gorbachev as vigorously as he has attacked the way in which the economy has been partly marketised and privatised under Yeltsin. It is not an attractive choice, and though there is some misplaced nostalgia in Russia for pre-perestroika Communism, for most electors it will be a question of whether they dislike Yeltsin and worry about the condition of contemporary Russia are greater than their fear of the Communists and their memory that it was the heirs of Lenin who marched them for 70 years on a road to nowhere. It is still possible to contend that the election of Yeltsin is the lesser evil, although that argument was

weakened when Yeltsin chose to bomb and shell the civilian population of Chechnya in recognition that they are part of the great Russian family. So far the death toll from that venture is between 30,000 and 40,000 and its objective is no closer to being realised. There are many citizens of the Russian Federation who would like a third option in the presidential elections. And there is no shortage of applicants — almost 50 at the last count. Yet the serious candidates in addition to Yeltsin and Zyuganov are probably not more than four — the ultra-nationalist, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy (who increasingly, as over Chechnya, offers succour to Yeltsin); the young economist, Grigory Yavlinsky, leader of a centrist party, Yabloko; the military man and relatively moderate Russian nationalist, Alexander Lebed; and the first and last President of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev. Given that surveys suggest quite strong adherence to many of the values of social democracy among citizens of Russia, it is, perhaps, surprising that no politician has emerged who can capitalise on that potential support. The

Communist Party of the Russian Federation attempts to do so, but as its leading members were among the most reactionary of Soviet Communists, its democratic credentials are, to say the least, dubious. It is, at first glance, strange that the most formidable politician to have entered the presidential contest, namely Gorbachev, looks so unlikely to reach the second round of the election. For Gorbachev not only moved from being a Communist reformer to a conscious transformer of the Soviet system, but also became, to all intents and purposes, a social democrat even while he retained the general secretaryship of the Soviet Communist Party. His reluctance to give up that office was based on his fear that, with a conservative Communist at the helm, the party could become a powerful instrument in the struggle to roll back the political freedoms and democratising measures of the perestroika era. Gorbachev, it is now forgotten, was the most popular politician in Russia for the greater part of his time in power. Even five years after he became Soviet leader he commanded more support than Yeltsin, although their relative standing changed sharply during his last two years in office and Yeltsin moved ahead in May 1990. But the survey data of the All-Russian Centre for the Study of Public Opinion also show that Gorbachev's popularity never sank to as low a point

survive. Yeltsin's role in this included his declaration that Russian law had supremacy over Union law and his later collaboration with the president of Ukraine and Belarus to wind up the Soviet state as a way of moving Gorbachev out of the Kremlin at all costs. Still more fundamental, of course, was the legacy of historic grievances of the minority nationalities of the Soviet Union. This meant that, once liberalisation and democratisation had been embarked upon by Gorbachev, even the most formidable politician in the world (which Gorbachev surely was during the second half of the 1980s) faced long odds against preserving intact the borders he inherited. It might have been done by resort to massive force (as Yeltsin hopes will work in Chechnya), but this Gorbachev refused to contemplate. It is ironic that it is for using insufficient coercion that he is blamed in Russia today, rather than for the several occasions when the security forces went on the rampage during his time in office. Each incident lasted one night before Gorbachev put a stop to the state violence which, in most cases, was directed as much at him as at the more immediate targets and was intended by its promoters — the same people who in August 1991 put Gorbachev under house arrest — to be but the beginning of a comprehensive crackdown.

MORE generally, Gorbachev is blamed for everything that has gone wrong since 1990 and even from 1982 onwards, a time when he has been out of office and president of a foundation, not a country. But for people who are tired of rising prices, rising crime, non-payment of wages, massive corruption, the yawning gap between rich and poor, the decline of public health and education services and much else, there is a tendency to blame not only Yeltsin, under whose jurisdiction most of this has occurred, but also Gorbachev for embarking on a path of radical change in the first place.

It is quite possible that Gorbachev, if he is given the requisite television time (and especially if he has learned the art of sound-bites or, at any rate, to speak more concisely than in the past), will be a more serious challenger for the democratic vote than most observers currently expect. He will be attacked in equal measure by the Communists, the nationalists and the Yeltsin camp; but to be attacked, rather than ignored, could be an advantage (as Yeltsin discovered during the perestroika years). Gorbachev has said that he would like to form a coalition of the democratic forces not currently represented in the Russian government. It remains unlikely that he will ever get the opportunity to do so, although the volatility of public opinion is such that his popularity could well rise from its current low level. But even if his support remains low, it is worth remembering that if Russians do have a choice of leader this summer, it is ultimately thanks to Gorbachev. As long ago as 1988, it was he who took the decision to depart from Communist norms and to move towards contested elections at the federal level, after which neither the Soviet Union nor Russia could ever be the same again.

More important, Gorbachev is blamed by the nationalists and Communists for the disintegration of the Soviet Union. This has now become unpopular in Russia, although it was he who tried to preserve the Union on a new basis — as a genuine rather than pseudo-federation. It was after all the unreconstructed Communists and nationalists, with their support for the August 1991 putsch, and Yeltsin who played a greater part in ensuring that a smaller and different Union, based on consent rather than coercion — which Gorbachev strove to establish with his Union Treaty — would not

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Shin Kanemaru

Tarnished gold of the godfather

SHIN Kanemaru, for almost a decade the all-powerful "Godfather" of Japanese politics, has died after a stroke, aged 81. He had never been prime minister himself — though he had made and broken quite a number — and was facing charges of evading millions of pounds of taxes on his ill-gotten gains. Even so, major television stations broke into their normal programmes to announce his death.

Former prime minister Kiichi Miyazawa, the last man to be put in power by Kanemaru, said that the former godfather "had ideas the bureaucrats couldn't have". Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto commented on his "great ability to manoeuvre things to his advantage".

But for the ordinary Japanese people, Kanemaru came to epitomise the grubby world of money politics, especially when investigators in 1993 discovered gold bars under his bed and unearthened stock certificates and bearer bonds all representing unclassified income. The fact that the first character of Kanemaru's surname stands for "gold" or "money" gave added point to the dirty discoveries. The godfather himself claimed that he was keeping the money to help realise his "dream" of realigning Japan's political forces: the electorate did that for him by turning his Liberal Democratic Party out of office in July 1993 after 38 unbroken years of power.

Kanemaru was unrepentant to look at or listen to. He had a raspy voice, almost like a Japanese doing an impression of Marlon Brando's Godfather. He was so inarticulate that he developed it almost to an art form, and many Japanese complained that they could not understand what he was saying; the

trick was to interpret the implied threat or menace. He was born into a family of sake brewers, very much the salt of Japan, and knew how to motivate and threaten people.

After graduating from Tokyo Agricultural University in 1937, he became a junior high school teacher. He was elected to parliament in 1958 representing the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and quickly learned how to play pork barrel politics looking after his own constituents and developing the connections that stood him in good stead in the smoke-filled back rooms where Japan's political decisions are taken. As he became a senior MP he duly picked up three cabinet posts, which are frequently awarded

ing out cheap shares to politicians before the company went public. Takeshita lied to parliament and was eventually forced to step down.

But the godfather went from strength to strength. He pulled the rug from under prime minister Toshiki Kaifu in 1981 when Kaifu dared to propose political reforms to clean up the system. He backed Miyazawa, who became Japan's most internationalist and most intelligent prime minister of modern times but also its weakest because he had to depend on Kanemaru's backing.

One important turning point came in December 1991, though its significance was not noticed at the time. Kanemaru's wife Eisuko died. He

spread public expression of outrage, with 31,000 people writing to the prosecutors' office complaining of a whitewash. Such was the outrage that Kanemaru stepped down, first as deputy president of the LDP, then from his parliamentary seat.

The storm did not pass, and Kanemaru, having lost his parliamentary immunity, was vulnerable to further questioning. In dramatic testimony from his hospital bed in November 1992, Kanemaru claimed to be the budget committee chairman and other MPs had not remembered what had happened at a crucial meeting with the head of Tokyo Sagawa because "I drank three glasses of mizuwari (whisky and water). Later, I had a few more. Under these circumstances I don't remember the discussion very well."

Given that the Sagawa group was reputed to have thrown lots of money around to up to 100 people, Kanemaru accepted the role of fall-guy for all his colleagues.

But his troubles were not over. Prosecutors, riled by criticism that they had not done their job properly over Sagawa, raided Kanemaru's homes and offices and there discovered the hoards of undeclared income. He was charged with evading 1.94 billion yen tax on 1.87 billion of undeclared income. His secretary Masahisa Habara was charged with similar tax evasion, and faces sentence today (whereas Kanemaru's charges lapse with his death).

Miyazawa, deprived of his godfather and protector, was powerless and the LDP split and lost a majority at the July 1993 election. If a picture can speak a thousand words, the image of Kanemaru entering court in July 1993 summed it up: a pathetic old man in a wheelchair, looking alone and frail, if not gaga.

The fine was the political equivalent of a parking ticket - 31,000 people wrote to the prosecutors' office complaining of a whitewash

was so dependent on her, according to Takao Toshiyama, editor of *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun*, that "he didn't know where his underwear was or what to wear each day, his wife did everything for him".

The storm that broke Kanemaru and the LDP burst in 1992. The godfather admitted that he had received an illegal "gift" of 500 million yen (£3 million) from Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin, a controversial parcel delivery firm. He was prosecuted under the political funds law, limiting donations from a single company to 1.5 million yen, and was fined 300,000 yen, without having to appear in court.

It was, complained one ex-prosecutor, the political equivalent of a parking ticket. For once, there was wide-



Decline and fall... Kanemaru enters court

In his declining days, he suffered from diabetes and glaucoma and was unable to communicate most of the time. Officials described him as "a senile old man" and "lucid for at most two hours a day". His trial had been postponed several times because of his illnesses.

Whether his downfall will lead to the end of money politics is an open question. Political reforms were duly passed by the "clean" government

Bishop Lloyd Morrell

The soul on intimate terms

LLOYD Morrell, who has died aged 88, was an essential presence known the Diocese of Chichester, first as Archdeacon, and then as Bishop of Lewes; but, apart from a few modest books, he gave little cause for being known in the Church at large. This was no small ground for satisfaction to him since the catholic tradition of the Church of England in which he was reared and which formed him does not set much store by bubble reputations acquired through publicised activities.

Throughout his long and intensive ministry, Lloyd Morrell was content to devote himself chiefly to those concerns which he considered proper to priest and bishop: pastoral care of clergy and laity, prayer, teaching, hearing confessions and being someone to flee to in times of critical need.

Apart from a spell as a travelling lecturer for the Church of England Moral Welfare Council during the war, his ministry was bounded by London, Brighton and the south coast. His first curacy, in Hendon, north London, set a character upon him of one to whom the sacred happened which rarely befell others. His first incumbent was a robust character who once shot at a hook — from which was suspended a particularly loathsome dead pig — on the wall of a butcher's shop, since the butcher declined to remove the offending corpse, the vicar having first declared: "No good comes to those who speak ill of God's priests".

A wartime visit to Lincoln, shortly after an air-raid, brought an exchange with a porter on the station: "I'm sorry to hear you've been having such a rotten time here in Lincoln." "That's all right, Sir, Bishop King is looking after us." Bishop King had been dead for 30 years. But it was George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, who discerned Morrell's monumental wisdom and rare holiness, and made him Archdeacon of Lewes before he was 40.

His devotion to motor-cycles was of practical benefit, and he would draw up, often unexpectedly, outside the churches and vicarages of mid-Sussex. He always brought cheer and encouragement to a harassed priest, and only rarely admonition, such as when he had to bellow down an ear-trumpet to a country priest in remonstrance that no services had been held on Good Friday in the parish.

His own life was founded upon deep prayer and self-discipline. Right into old age he preserved his habit of very early rising so that he could have time for his devotions before the daily Mass. For many years he was Proctor of the southern division of the Woodard Schools. He loved the schools of the division deeply, and was for ever available to harassed heads for discerning and reassuring counsel.

For 50 years he shared his semi-detached house in Hove, first with one sister and after her death with another. It was a house which while clearly

despising fashion and all but the most basic comforts, yet exuded a warmth of welcome which made it a haven for a long line of priests and lay. Bishop Morrell left it only for holidays in Cornwall or Malta, where he was able to exercise his considerable skill as a photographer (and in Cornwall at least once he heard a farmer's confession sitting on a haystack).

He had an intimate knowl-



Morrell... early devotions

edge of the waterways of England in general and London in particular. But it is for his intimate knowledge of human souls and of God's dealings with them that he will be remembered by a great host of people who had cause to bless his name.

Richard Eyre

Right Reverend James Herbert Lloyd Morrell, born August 12, 1907; died March 28, 1996

Death Notices

BAKER, Peter who died on Friday 22nd March 1996 will be interred with a brief service at Highgate Cemetery, St James' Road, London NW8 7BA on Tuesday 26th March 1996. Friends are invited to attend the funeral service on Wednesday 27th March 1996 at 11.30am at Highgate Cemetery, St James' Road, London NW8 7BA. The funeral will take place on Wednesday 27th March 1996 at 11.30am at Highgate Cemetery, St James' Road, London NW8 7BA. The funeral will take place on Wednesday 27th March 1996 at 11.30am at Highgate Cemetery, St James' Road, London NW8 7BA.

Acknowledgments

BILL KIMMOCK and his family wish to express their thanks to everyone who has helped them in the past few weeks. They would like to thank in particular: Mrs. J. Kimmock, Mrs. S. Kimmock, Mrs. M. Kimmock, Mrs. P. Kimmock, Mrs. R. Kimmock, Mrs. T. Kimmock, Mrs. V. Kimmock, Mrs. W. Kimmock, Mrs. X. Kimmock, Mrs. Y. Kimmock, Mrs. Z. Kimmock.

In Memoriam

SMITH, Thomas Patrick, died 9 December 1995 in the 72nd year of his life. He was born on 12th December 1922. He was a member of the Royal Air Force and served in the Middle East and the Far East. He was a devoted family man and a good friend. He is survived by his wife and three children.

Engagements

CHOUHURRY - PHILLIPS The engagement of Miss Philippa Chouhurry to Mr. Robert Phillips is announced. Miss Chouhurry is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. Chouhurry of London. Mr. Phillips is the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Phillips of London. The wedding will take place on Saturday 6th April 1996 at St. Paul's Church, London.

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Jack Churchill

Into battle with a bow and arrow

HAD JACK Churchill, the wartime commander who led the 1st Airborne Division into battle in Normandy, been impossible to invent him, as no fictional hero with his record would have been credited. Churchill, who has died aged 89, was impatient with the dull routine of peacetime soldiering, despite an adventurous few years in the Indian sub-continent, and had been out of the army for three years when war broke out in 1939. It was only then that he truly came into his own as a frontline commander of irregular troops.

Irregular best described the approach to soldiering of John Malcolm Thorpe Fleming Churchill, born the son of a colonial public works director in Surrey, yet as Scotland as that other flamboyant commander, Lord Lovat. Both men marched into battle to the sound of the bagpipes, but whereas Lovat brought a piper Churchill played his own. And where Lovat carried a hunting rifle, Churchill was the first Highlander in centuries to go into battle with a bow and arrow, which was no mere stage prop. It is easy to understand why his name called him Mad Jack Churchill. Educated at King William's College on the Isle of Man, Churchill was accepted for Sandhurst and joined the second battalion of the Manchester regiment in Burma as a subaltern in 1920. Once there he took a motor-cycle to places where no machine had ever been before, bumping and roaring his way to and

fro across India for thousands of miles. He could hardly have had more appropriate training for forced marches than when patrolling the jungle with his platoon, showing the flag in remote villages.

To while away off-duty hours while stationed near Mandalay, he persuaded a Highland pipe-major to teach him the bagpipes. What the residents of up-country Burma made of killed master

and pupil playing their pipes in the jungle is a matter for speculation. It was at that point that he also took up the bow and arrow.

Life back in England could only be an anti-climax, and in 1936 Churchill resigned and travelled in many parts of Europe, earning his keep with his new, esoteric skills. He even represented Britain at the world archery championships in 1939. Recalled to

his regiment, he took his bow to war and used it to deadly effect. He was the first of many gallantry decorations, the MC, when he fought his company out of a trap in the retreat across northern France, when he was also wounded.

He was back in England when his unit was sent to the Balkans. Winston ordered the formation of the army commando force for "pinprick" raids on occupied Europe late in 1940. A year later Major Churchill was deputy commander of a mixed force which staged a raid on Norway.

Like some reincarnation of Rob Roy, he led his men ashore to the sound of his own bagpipes, festooned with all bow and arrow. Highland kilt and sporran. His philosophy was to be seen leading from the front, inspiring the enemy, he succeeded in both aims and went on to win a double DSO.

While recovering from wounds in 1941, Churchill married Rosamund Denny, the mother of their two sons. In 1945, as a lieutenant-colonel, he took charge of Number 2 Commando for the landings in Sicily and Italy, where he and his unit prevented the Salerno beachhead from being overrun.

Leading a mixed assault force in a raid on the Yugoslav coast later in the year, he was captured. His letter accounts of his fair treatment by the local German commander saved the latter's life

at a war-crimes trial. But others jollied took over; Churchill's letter and only my victim to Hitler's infamous order to shoot commandos out of hand but was brutally treated at a concentration camp. So he tunneled his way out.

On capture, he was sent to a proper POW camp in Austria — from which he escaped again, this time finding his way across the Alps to join Allied forces in Italy. Japan surrendered before his new commando unit went into battle.

Staying on in the army after the war, he gained his jumper's wings at the age of 40, to qualify for command of a Scottish parachute battalion. Returning to his substantive rank of major, the personally modest Churchill achieved an old ambition by transferring to the Seafarths as a company commander before moving to the Highland Light Infantry as second-in-command.

After difficult and dangerous service of another kind in the British withdrawal from Palestine, Churchill returned to Britain and held a series of senior training posts, the last of which was as the founding commander of the Outward Bound School. In civilian life, he made a business of restoring old Thames launches.

Letter

David Craig writes: Jim Ferrin is unable to make his own points without flummaging at other climbing writers. In his obituary of W H Murray (March 25) he asserts that in my book *Nature Stems I am "abusive" and "dismissive"* of that excellent writer. In my 40 pages on him I in fact called Murray "the best living representative of the Wordsworthian tradition" in mountaineering literature, likened him in detail to Shelley and Keats, and said that "my respect for Murray's understanding of the mountains could hardly be greater". I also took issue with his Platonic or idealist philosophy which, as I see it, describes the beauty of nature to "something underlying this world" — a view which I argued respectfully and passionately. If Ferrin thinks this is "dismissive" let alone "abusive", then he has no understanding of either literary language or intellectual controversy — strange in one of our more eloquent and thoughtful writers, whose life of Don Williams we have all been awaiting for many years now.

Birthdays

Richard Rodney Bennett, composer, 68; **Jennifer Capriata**, tennis player, 39; **Bernard Davey**, weatherman, 53; **James Diggle**, classicist, 52; **Julie Goodyear**, actress, 51; **Margaret Howard**, broadcaster, 58; **Eric Idle**, actor-comedian, playwright, 53; **Jack Jones**, CH, trade unionist and pensioners' champion, 88; **Sheila Katzinger**, writer and childbirth educator, 59; **Sylvia Law**, town planner, 65; **Prof Simon Lee**, moral

philosopher, rector and chief executive, Liverpool Hope University College, 39; **Allison MacFarlane**, statistician, 54; **John Major**, MP, Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party, 53; **Ruby Murray**, singer, 61; **Chapman Pincher**, journalist, 62; **Fiona Reynolds**, director, Council for the Protection of Rural England, 38; **Anne Stoddart**, diplomat, 59; **John Suchet**, broadcaster, 52; **Lord Tebbit**, CH, 65.

Jackdaw



Yum, yum, yum

IN THESE gastronomically correct days food isn't just food any more. It's not that oven-ready dish you can snatch from the supermarket shelf and blithely serve up for guests or yourself. Or, even more mundanely, the fuel that drives your physical engine. Food is now a cultural and social phenomenon, so scrutinised and discussed, photographed and drooled over that — since style pundits love tags — it has become the new sex. Just as sex was the sex of the seventies, property the sex of the eighties, food has become the sex of the

nineties. It makes perfect sense to restaurateur Oliver Peyton: "People eat more often than they have sex. I think it is a feel-good thing... People have changed their ways of expressing themselves: their happiness is being channelled in a different way. This is a new way of going out to a nightclub. Food is a new drug, a new high... Our faith in God may have almost vanished and even our trust in sex and property has been badly shaken (by disease and negative equity, respectively). But we will always need to eat..."

[Award-winning food writer] Nigel Slater also believes that there is a considerable element of myth making and fantasy involved in the modern appreciation of food. "There is a lot of dreaming. You are as unlikely to cook exactly what is on the food pages of magazines as you are to have a home like something in *The World Of Interiors*..." Like sex itself, you don't have to cook the food to enjoy it... Just as in the seventies it was considered avant-garde to talk openly

about sex, and in the Eighties it was actually thought interesting to brag about mortgaged and obscure decorative finishes, in the nineties the emphasis is on pushing back gastronomic limits.

Abundance

ITHOUGHT I hated exercise. My dad shoved it down my throat for 10 years, so subsequently I spent ten years refusing to do anything remotely resembling exercise. Ultimate Frisbee? Skiing? Sounds like fun, but it just might be exercise in disguise; can't have any of that, can we? Stubborn. I mean I was truly stubborn about the issue. Fat Girls Aerobics changed all that. Not my father's exercise, by a long shot. Officially, it is called Abundance, but I've always called it Fat Girls Aerobics or FGA.

The class is for women size 16 and up. Big strong women. Women who take up space. Women my size. FGA

changed my life. For one hour, three times a week, a whole bunch of big huge women wearing lycra/cotton bodysuits and leggings in front of a full-length mirror, dancing our hearts out to Ferrari, Bonnie Raitt, Neville Bros, Aretha Franklin, and more. It feels so amazing, I realise it is not exercise I hate, so much as the attitude that the entire exercise industry seems to uphold. I used to walk into Gold's Gym and I could just feel how small everyone hated fat. They were trying to rid themselves of every ounce of fat, and as a fat woman, I felt like the very embodiment of everything they hated. That doesn't make it easy to want to exercise... But now that I've tried FGA, I'm stunned. I love exercise, it makes me happy, I get high off of either theendorphins or the sweat or both. As I fell in love with my body, I found that I was having a lot more sex. And doing FGA made me want more sex. I never knew exercise could do that. And I was happier: the few times I didn't go to the class, I found

myself getting depressed. The class actually became the highest priority in my life, my new-found religion. Something about the smell of sweat made me want to ask every woman in the class out on a date. Pheromones rule my world.

Back to front

CLICHES CAN unwittingly reflect deeper truths. Many years ago, a facetious colleague sent me a copy of an old cartoon... This particular item dealt with China and presented an assortment of fanciful or semi-fanciful distortions about Chinese language, culture, history and customs. The interest of this cartoon was that it offered a fairly representative summing up of the popular perception of China in the Western consciousness. The gist of this perception was not so much that China was enigmatic, complicated, and bizarre, as more specifically



that it was a topsy-turvy world: the Chinese do everything exactly to the reverse of our "normal" usages and procedures. For instance, "When the Chinese build a house, they start from the roof"; "When in mourning, they wear white"; "They write upside down, and right to left"; "When greeting someone, they shake their own hand"; etc. None of these observations is actually wrong. And the general conclusion is basically valid.

Shed speak

RATIONALE: The shed, with its contents and use, is a major archetype within the male psyche; the exigencies of modern life are, however, gradually eroding the typical male's knowledge of the joys of shedding. This may well be contributing to the breakdown of modern society that we see around us every day. Hereafter there has been no suitable forum on Usenet where shedders can gather to pursue the furtherance of shedding. This newsgroup

provides such a place, and will hopefully attract many of the unshedded into the hobby... Though sheds appear throughout the English speaking world it is felt that Britain is their cultural home...

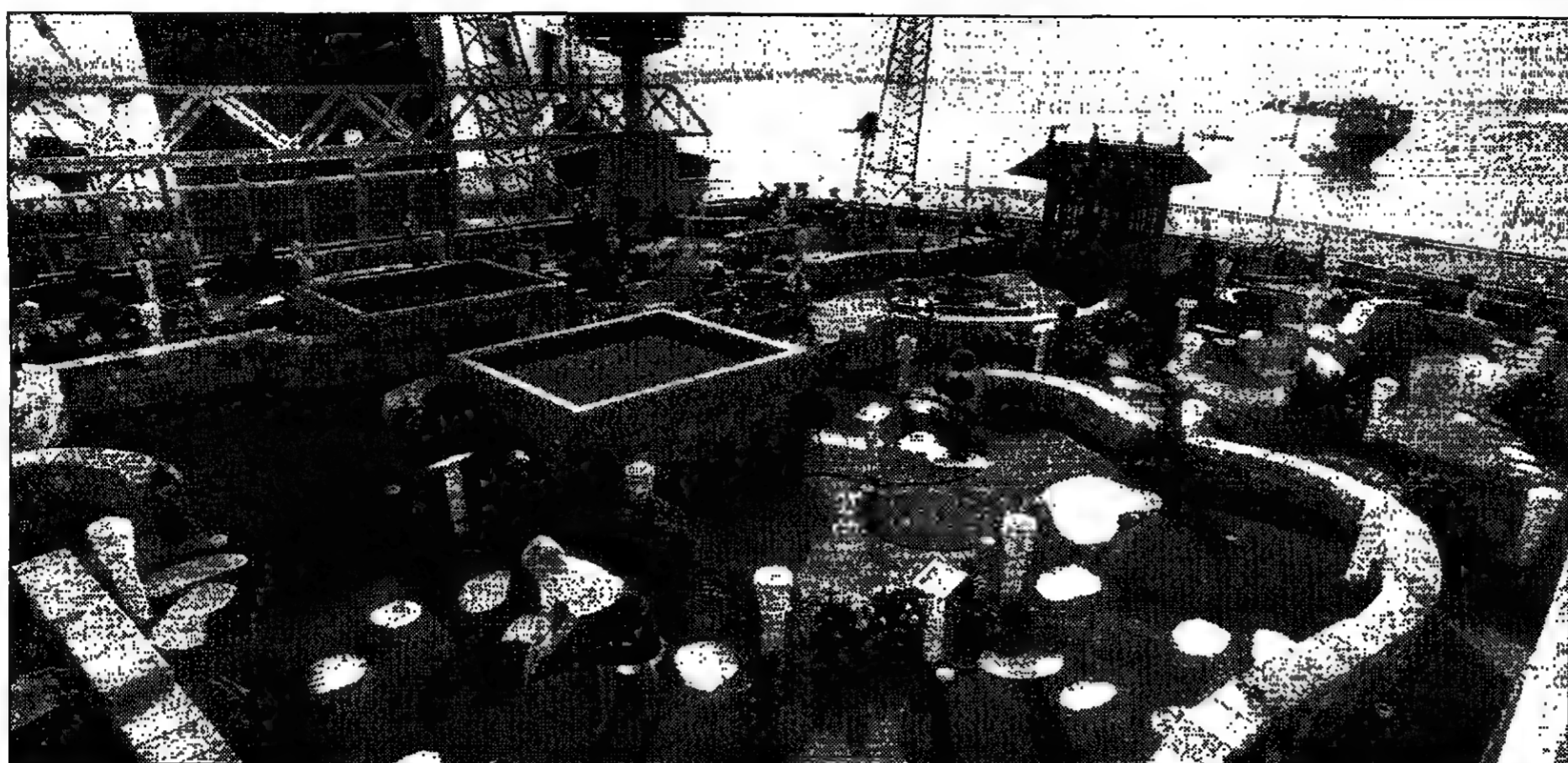
CHARTER: The group is for discussions relating to sheds and their equivalents (eg properly arranged cellars), their use, their contents, and the culture of shedding. While shedding has been, in the past, a primarily male pursuit we cannot deny that both sexes manifest aspects of both genders to varying degrees, so everybody is welcome in uk.rec.sheds. An outline for the proposed uk.rec.sheds newsgroup on the Internet. Thanks to Peter Byrne.

Jackdaw wants your jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171-713 4586; Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Raffleington Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Don Glaister

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian



Top hole... an onboard golf course is one attraction of Royal Caribbean Line's new 69,130-ton cruise ship Splendour of the Seas, which sailed into Southampton yesterday to begin a series of European summer cruises. Golf balls are biodegradable, so drives missing the 7,000 sq ft of greens and bunkers do not pose a pollution problem. PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEASER

Mega-merger of BT with Cable & Wireless would create £33bn empire • Mercury may have to be sold

Regulators ready for call

Chris Barrie and Mark Millar
EUROPEAN and UK regulators were standing by last night to begin scrutiny of the proposed £33 billion merger between BT and Cable & Wireless, a process that would almost certainly finish by requiring BT/C&W to sell Mercury Communications.

Mercury is BT's main UK rival in the supply of long distance and international telephone services to business and domestic customers. The trade and industry department, which is responsible for issuing telecoms licences, could not allow the merger to go ahead unless ministers were sure that adequate competition for BT could be maintained.

One distinct possibility is that the US telecoms group, AT&T, would buy Mercury. Such a move would be welcomed by the cable television industry, which wants a stronger rival to BT in the provision of long distance and international services. A more powerful competitor would give them a wider choice of international interconnection.

The merger would be scrutinised by the DTI, assisted by the Office of Fair Trading and the telecoms regulator, Don Cruickshank and officials from his office, Ofal. The OFT examines competition issues, and Ofal would advise on its ability to enforce the licence conditions imposed on the restructured industry.

Because of the scale of the merger, European Commission officials would also scrutinise the deal. The BT/C&W combine would also face scrutiny from regulators in Europe as it disconnected alliances.

Both BT and C&W have alliances in Germany, where Vebe has a 10.6 per cent stake in C&W, while BT has links with the utilities Vag and RWE which are designed to provide it with access to Europe's telecommunications market.

Profile: BT
Private line to vast profit
Sarah Whitbooz

348½p per share at last night's closing price. Along the way, the group has acquired many of the trappings of the private sector — a star-studded board of directors and criticism of chairman Sir Iain Vallance's pay.

The years since privatisation have also seen numerous technological advances and changes in BT's operations. In the 10 years to 1994, the company spent £20 billion on developing the UK network — more than £70 for every second of the day.

Profile: C&W
Held back by rows at the top
Ian King

known assets are its 80 per cent stake — worth £1.7 billion — in Mercury Communications, set up in 1995 as a direct rival to BT, and a 57½ per cent stake in Hong Kong Telecom, valued at around £7 billion.

BT in 1982, has never quite fulfilled expectations. Although it has competed aggressively on price terms with BT, it was never able to make any real inroads.

FROM Buzby via Beattie to Bob Hoskins, BT has transformed its corporate image since its privatisation in 1984.

BT also boasts that in many cases its prices have fallen since 1984, although Ofal, the telecoms regulator, has criticised the company about certain pricing arrangements.

FOR one of Britain's highest-tech companies, with access to one of the world's fastest-growing telecoms markets, Cable & Wireless has a surprisingly long history.

Founded in 1872, as the Eastern Telegraph Company, it merged with Marconi in 1929 to form Imperial and International Communications — an unwieldy name which was changed to C&W in 1934.

Mercury, which won a licence to compete against BT in 1982, has never quite fulfilled expectations. Although it has competed aggressively on price terms with BT, it was never able to make any real inroads.

Lord Young's main achievement at C&W was his attempt to turn the company into a "federation" of worldwide telecoms businesses — an idea which has been quietly dropped since his departure.

Storm over job cuts and price rises at utilities firm

Chris Barrie and Martin Husbands
THE electricity and water company United Utilities raised a storm of protest yesterday when it unveiled plans to raise prices, axe 1,700 jobs and sell businesses employing 4,500 people.

Other recent price increases — at Eastern, Yorkshire and London — were also less than United's increase. United softened the blow by extending its 56.50 rebate on water bills for another year.

Labour MPs, unions and consumer groups condemned the news. Shadow employment minister Ian McCartney said the taxpayer would be "landed with a huge bill for unemployment benefit as employees jobs are sacrificed to give a quick fix to the balance sheet."

Labour spells out plans for privatised Railtrack

Keith Harper
LABOUR will today commit itself to the principle of public accountability and ownership of Railtrack when it finally reveals its tactics to unseat the flotation.

There is less likely to be a problem with the company taking over the 30-minute Gatwick Express service from London Victoria station to Gatwick airport. National Express has seen off a challenge for the franchise from Richard Branson's Virgin group as well as a management buy-out team.

Adam Mills, deputy chief executive of National Express, said that Mr Salmon's decision was a welcome recognition of the company's expertise in public transport. He said its successful policies would now be applied to train operations. If necessary, it would be prepared to give further undertakings.

Britain may gain top operator



Edited by Alex Brummer

AFTER so many false starts, Sir Iain Vallance of British Telecom and Rod Olsen, Cable & Wireless's acting chief executive, must this time carve out a deal that sticks.

The stock market is clearly optimistic. Before C&W was forced into the open last night its shares had risen some 7 per cent, creating the kind of chaotic market for which London has become infamous.

It has been clear since Lord Young and James Ross were ousted by institutional shareholders last November that the best solution for C&W investors and Britain — the latter an interest sometimes forgotten in these matters — would be a merger between the UK's telecom leaders. BT, which has enormous international ambitions, would win a super-stake in the Pacific Rim through C&W's 57.5 per cent ownership of Hong Kong Telecom, together with interests in some of the most fascinating emerging market economies, from Israel to Russia.

Global ambition

TEN years ago, Morgan Grenfell was among the first wave of British merchant banks to reveal the size of its hidden reserves. Now its subsequent parent, Deutsche Bank, has followed suit by announcing to the world that it is sitting on some DM20 billion (£9 billion) of unrealised gains on its portfolio of listed securities.

Bank intelligence

THE Bank of England's regional shake-up, which will result in the loss of as many as 150 jobs, is bound to attract adverse comment in a week filled with redundancies and downsizing.

Clarke calls go-it-alone pound a 'terrible mistake'

Sarah Ryle
THE Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, last night risked the wrath of his party's Euro-sceptics when he said it would be a "terrible mistake" for Britain to opt out of monetary union.

He acknowledged concern across the EU that not enough countries would meet the Maastricht criteria for economic and monetary union. But Mr Clarke, one of the most pro-European Cabinet members, said foreign companies had established themselves in the UK partly because it gave them a base inside the single market. If Britain was outside the single currency area the possible loss of investment was a "problem that would have to be addressed".

Kipper Williams
UNITED UTILITIES
GREEN METER
UNITED UTILITIES logo and a small illustration of a person.

TOURIST RATES — BANK BELLS

Australia 1.85	France 7.45	Italy 2.345	Singapore 2.19
Austria 15.25	Germany 2.000	Japan 165.000	South Africa 5.25
Belgium 44.50	Greece 352.00	Netherlands 2.4500	Spain 165.75
Canada 2.0125	Hong Kong 11.54	New Zealand 2.21	Sweden 10.00
Cyprus 0.6975	India 52.07	Norway 9.57	Switzerland 1.7825
Denmark 6.45	Ireland 0.9425	Portugal 222.00	Turkey 99.500
Finland 6.99	Israel 4.75	Saudi Arabia 5.85	USA 1.4225

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqel)

Miners to benefit from company's early repayment of £368m debt



Richard Budge, chief executive (left) and Gordon McPhie, financial director, revealed better than expected profits

RJB surprise £100m buy-back means shareholders' bonanza

Nicholas Barnister Technology Editor
RJB MINING is planning a bonanza for its shareholders following early repayment of £368 million of bank borrowings used to fund the acquisition of the main coal mining activities of British Coal in late 1994.

accelerated dividend growth. Richard Budge, chief executive, said that the bank debt would be fully repaid by April 1996, freeing the group from restrictions on its dividend payments.

Employees will each receive about 2500 of shares through the scheme, taking their collective stake in the company to over 5 per cent. The group reported a more than 20 per cent increase in pre-tax profits — from £16 million to £173 million — reflecting the inclusion of the former British Coal interests for the first time and higher than expected coal sales.

stockpiles, amounted to 41.9 million tonnes. Exceptionally high demand from power generators during the cold weather at the end of the year boosted sales by about 3 million tonnes, worth between £16 million and £17 million.

is not viable by October this year. The group and City analysts are concerned about the long-term future of the coal market in the UK, particularly when contracts with the big power generators end in 1998.

Old Lady to axe 150 jobs in the regions

Alex Brummer and Pauline Springett
THE Bank of England yesterday added to the recent spate of job losses in the financial sector by disclosing that it is to cut back its regional operations.

and a supply of economic information to the Bank's headquarters in the City. The economic data is to be repackaged and published quarterly alongside the Bank's inflation report providing a guide to regional economic activity.

In future, the Bank's regional operations will be confined to economic and industrial liaison functions, requiring small professional staffs rather than an army of security officials looking after cash.

Meanwhile, a report published yesterday by accountants Coopers & Lybrand and the Economic Intelligence Unit warned that banks would axe up to 50 per cent of their workforce by the end of the century.

The remaining banking operations in the regions, largely for municipal authorities, will be closed with the accounts being moved to the commercial sector.

Banking union Bifu has estimated that some 85,000 jobs have already disappeared from the industry in the past six years thanks to the twin pressures of technological change and mergers.

Splitting off its music business is likely to cost Thorn-EMI £130m

Lisa Buckingham
THORN EMI expects to pay break-up and reorganisation charges of £130 million following the decision to demerge its music business — one of the largest in the world with recording stars such as Janet Jackson and Super-

lion maximum Thorn outlined yesterday. In addition, the company said that it would spend £25 million to reorganise EMI Music in North America and another £30 million on the Thorn rental business in the US and Europe.

but the group yesterday gave no detail about the planned business restructuring. Shares rose by another 19p to 1673p even though the group said it would delay the demerger by three weeks until August 19.

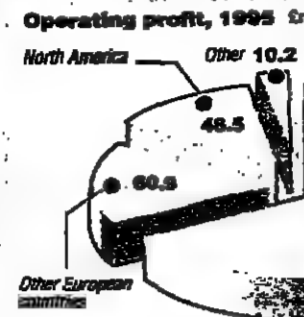
and the planned treatment of share incentive schemes. The break-up is expected to prompt a global auction for the EMI Music arm. Although Thorn denies receiving any serious expressions of interest, companies such as Disney and Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation are among putative predators.

Builders' merchant digs in for a lengthy and expensive battle

Outlook
Tony May
FACED with a seemingly endless recession, companies in the construction and building materials industries which expanded like mad in the eighties are engaged in a slimming race under the slogan "focus upon core business" by issuing a profits warning.

Table with 2 columns: Metric and Value. Includes Stock market value (£1.9bn), Share price (384p), Workforce (UK) (6,000), Interest cover (10.6).

Table with 2 columns: Metric and % change. Includes Sales (2.7bn), Pre-tax profit (395m), Earnings per share (20.8p), Dividend (16.67p).



Six years ago, when the long restructuring of the construction industry began, Redland had the advantage that it got half its profits from Germany, where a construction boom was in full force.

Last year there was a lot of destocking of products. We could get a rapid reversal. His long-term recovery plan is to focus on roofing and aggregates and, as a first step, Redland is talking with the minority shareholders of the group's German roofing business. It wants to put it together with similar businesses in Britain and Holland.

He said there had been a significant and progressive decline in trading conditions from the end of the first quarter of last year. The group sold 13 per cent less sand and gravel, 12 per cent less dry stone, 11 per cent less ready-mixed concrete and 7 per cent less coated stone.

Ambitious Deutsche Bank reveals £9bn worth of previously hidden assets

Mark Milner European Business Editor
GERMANY'S biggest bank yesterday lifted the lid on one of its biggest secrets — a cool 26 billion marks worth (£3 billion) of previously hidden reserves.

territorial value — some 30.2 billion marks — but under international accounting standards they must be valued at their market price — 50 billion marks.

had been expecting. The bank is expecting that it will turn in a "satisfactory" performance in the current year — though it warned that the business climate in Germany would put pressure on lending margins and risks of defaults remained high.

Axe out after merger of statistical offices

Richard Thomas Economics Correspondent
TWO hundred civil servants face the sack after the government's two statistical arms are merged into a single Office of National Statistics.

Tim Holt, head of the new body, said yesterday that staff from administration departments would be lost after the merger.

Outlining plans aimed at making the new national office a world leader in the provision of statistics, Prof Holt said: "All the important data about the lives of everyone in Britain — their births, marriages and deaths; their social and economic situation; and their contribution to the economy — will be brought together in a single organisation."

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RUGBY LEAGUE BECOMES SUPER LEAGUE TONIGHT IN PARIS

Make or break with Murdoch

Paul Fitzpatrick on the hopes and fears behind the first Super League season of summer rugby — and its £87 million question

PARIS St Germain and Sheffield Eagles will take the 13-man code into a new and uncertain world when they meet in the opening match of the European Super League season at the Charley stadium tonight.

Put at its most basic, Super League will be the making or the breaking of the game. The switch to "summer" rugby could be a master-stroke or it could be a ghastly mistake.

At present the pessimists perhaps marginally outnumber the optimists. This is not entirely surprising in view of the turmoil in Australia where Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, the backer of the Super League, has suffered a crushing and costly defeat in its battle with the Australian Rugby League.

Murdoch, with an investment of \$87 million, is committed to the European Super League for five years — but now that his Australasian ambitions are in tatters, how long will the northern side retain his interest?

Clubs are still waiting for the second round of Murdoch money, due in May, and no one actually seems to have seen any contract between News Corporation and the Rugby Football League. No one in the game believes that Murdoch would pull the plug just like that, but then neither did the employees of Today newspaper.

There are other fears. From a situation where too much football was being played, the

that meet the minimum standards laid down in the code's Framing The Future document.

But the revolution had to start somewhere. Rugby league, in spite of the quality of the product on the pitch, badly needed a change of direction, and Super League should provide it. Some spectators might be lost but the chance is also there to win a new audience and already there are signs that might be happening.

The players welcome the switch to summer, and standards, now that all the participants will be full-time, should continue to rise. The clubs will have far more full-time officials, too, and that should lead to a more dynamic approach to public relations, promotion and marketing. State-of-the-art stadiums might be some way off but we should see a steady improvement in ground facilities.

The players can practically be guaranteed to do their stuff. Wigan will no doubt set the standard again and they are odds-on favourites to win their eighth championship in succession. But although the rest of the clubs respect Wigan they are no longer overawed by them. Let the good times roll.

Castleford have given their former All Black Franco Botica permission to play "limited" rugby union next winter under "certain conditions". The Courage league clubs Sale, Orrell and Mossley are a lot of games will be played at grounds that non-league soccer would scorn. Possibly only Paris, London and Sheffield — and they are only tenants at their grounds — will be playing in stadiums



Blaster of Paris... Tas Baitieri, the club's general manager, wears his heart on his sleeve before tonight's game against Sheffield Eagles. PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW WAPLEY

Fouroux at the forefront of the French revolution

IAN BORTHWICK on the union man driving the hi-tech Super League into Paris

RUGBY LEAGUE has never had an easy time in France. It is significant only in a corner of the southern region of Languedoc, where the inhabitants of Perpignan and Carcassonne proudly claim their identity as *trévistes*. Until the fast-talking Jacques Fouroux came along, *le rugby à treize* was sinking into oblivion.

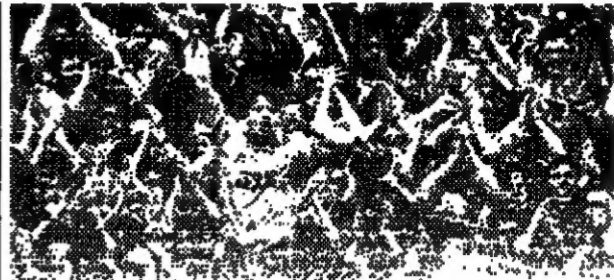
If anyone can breathe life into it, it is Fouroux, former international scrum-half, captain and coach of the France XV, and 3rd in of turbo-charged energy and rhetoric with the spellbinding capacity to convince the most determined of unbelievers.

At one of the first meetings he attended after his conversion in 1984, Fouroux maintained a low profile at the beginning but by the end of the evening had the grizzled former players eating out of his hand as he explained their own game to them and how it should be played in the future. He is now the force of Super League in France.

Historically and politically the odds have always been against the 13-man game in France. Having flourished in the pre-war years, league was as strong as a union when the second world war broke out. The French rugby union, accused of professionalism by its British counterparts, had been ostracised from 1932 to 1959, forcing players (including

The doughty dozen

- WIGAN**
Coach: Graeme West
Captains: Robbie Edwards
Centenary Cup position: 1
Odds (Corse): 11-4 on
Salford's cup win gave everyone hope, and Wigan may not be the force they were. But they remain the game's pre-eminent club. Close runs under the side and they have fine youngsters on the way up in Rob Smyth, Steve Barrow and Andy Johnson.
Man to watch: Henry Paul
- ST HELENS**
Coach: Shaun McAfee
Captains: Shaun Edwards
Position in CC: 4
Odds: 4-1
A real sense of optimism pervades Knowsley Road these days. If Saints can get their defence right and not lose their renowned attacking capabilities they might even be good enough to pip Wigan. But their erratic nature always demands caution.
Man to watch: Paul Newlove
- SHEFFIELD EAGLES**
Coach: Gary Hetherington
Captains: Paul Broadbent
Position in CC: 5
Odds: 50-1
Tend to make daft errors, but finished the Centenary Championship on the biggest roll in their 12-year history. They know this is their greatest chance to win over a reluctant Sheffield public and they do not intend to blow it. A summer season should bring out the best in their Fijian signs.
Man to watch: Andy Hay
- LEEDS**
Coach: Dean Bell
Captains: Neil Marnon
Position in CC: 2
Odds: 11-2
Prospects should have been brighter than they are. But they have lost outstanding players in Elley Haynes, Garry Schofield and Craig Innes and good ones in Paul Cook and James Lowes. Some fine young players on way up, but overall strength may be lacking.
Man to watch: Adrian Morley
- BRADFORD BULLS**
Coach: Brian Smith
Captains: Robbie Paul
Position in CC: 7
Odds: 15-1
Undergone massive change of playing personnel since Smith arrived last summer, but surprised everyone with the quality of their cup semi-final win over Leeds. More than most they have understood and embraced Super League concept. A club now bubbling with enthusiasm.
Man to watch: Matt Galland
- HALIFAX**
Coach: Steve Simms
Captains: Robbie Paul
Position in CC: 3
Odds: 20-1
South Seas signings Mike Umaga, Fereti Tuilagi, Martin Moana and Asa Amone illuminated the Centenary season and could be even more effective on dry grounds. Might lack overall strength of champions but capable of beating anyone.
Man to watch: Richard Gay
- CASTLEFORD**
Coach: John Joyner
Captains: Les Crooks
Position in CC: 8
Odds: 66-1
Will be hoping Franco Botica's incomparable goalkeeping will give them an edge in the tight games. Richard Gay, the former Hull full-back, should be another valuable signing. But they want strength in depth. Unpredictability remains their great flaw.
Man to watch: Richard Gay
- LONDON BRONCOS**
Coach: Tony Currie
Captains: Terry Matterson
Position in CC: 10
Odds: 66-1
Might just be the surprise package. Now tied at the Valley, hard grounds should make their sizeable Australian contingent feel even more at home. The club's best — perhaps last — chance to show the capital what a great game rugby league can be.
Man to watch: Gavin Allen
- WARRINGTON**
Coach: John Dorahy
Captains: Peter Cullen
Position in CC: 9
Odds: 20-1
Depressing end to last season, might take a season to recover. Will not wait for enthusiasm with Alex Murphy as manager. Former soccer club they have spoken to the lethal goal-kicker, now 32, an international at both codes.
Man to watch: Paul Southoppe
- PARIS ST GERMAIN**
Coach: Michel Mazare
Captains: Pierre Charnon
Position in CC: 1
Odds: 150-1
Dire predictions of a few weeks ago have changed into something far more positive. Carry hopes of a country rather than a city, and with a fine stadium, useful-looking squad and backing of Paris St Germain soccer club they may spring a few surprises.
Man to watch: Frederic Banquet
- OLDHAM**
Coach: Andy Goodway
Captains: Martin Crompton
Position in CC: 6
Odds: 150-1
Goodway has proved an admirable young coach, dedicated and ambitious, but may still lack the material to fulfil his aims. But team showed encouraging signs towards end of Centenary season.
Man to watch: Dave Bradbury
- WORKINGTON TOWN**
Coach: Ross O'Reilly
Captains: Colin Armstrong
Position in CC: Bottom
Odds: 500-1
Most pundits' prediction to fill the last place they occupied during the Centenary season. Racked by financial problems and the subject of repeated takeover talk in recent months, Cumbria deserves a Super League club but a miracle or two may be needed from the new Australian coach O'Reilly to preserve his status.
Man to watch: Stephen Holgate



Extra time Edited by Jeremy Alexander

Another wild Shergar chase

EVER since Shergar was kidnapped on a February night in 1983 horsemen, policemen, cameramen and journalists have tried to put flesh on the bare bones of the story. Hoaxes have not helped.

Yet every so often a variation on the search for Shergar slips into the media, even if it disappears a day or two later. Last week a report on RTE's Nationwide programme stated that a consortium of Dublin businessmen — "one of whom is quite powerful" — had arranged for Shergar's bones to be exhumed from a grave in the border counties. Moreover the businessmen had done another deal, with movie men from Hollywood.

The Californians understandably want absolute verification that the bones are those of Shergar, not a pit pony. They need DNA, and the DNA evidence is in the hands of a dual third party: Mary Fanning, who broke the story on RTE, and Des Lee, the head of clinical pathology at the Irish Equine Centre. Fanning, daughter of a senior police officer in the original investigation, said the cost of the identification process to the Equine Centre would be around £25,000. For some reason it has not occurred.

Lee don says it is possible "as we now have access to original material collected from Shergar before his disappearance. It means we don't have to go to Shergar's relatives to identify him. We can use the material from the horse before his presumed death."

And, according to a man who should know, Shergar is dead. Sean O'Callaghan spends his days in Maghway, the prison in Northern Ireland, having handed himself in, but was once the IRA's chief of staff.

A few years ago Stan Cosgrove sent a lawyer to speak to O'Callaghan, who said he had been killed within two days of the abduction. Cosgrove, with shares in Shergar, needed to know for compensation purposes and O'Callaghan signed a document to this end.

Cosgrove, one of many who know who took Shergar, never got his money. Ireland is a land of open secrets but not, as yet, open graves, not even with Hollywood on the line.

Sixth column

OLTON and West Warwickshire are victims of their successful youth policy at women's hockey — or, as they see it, of the AEWHA's inflexibility. Led by the former Great Britain captain Barbara Hambly, they have won promotion from the Second Division and reached Sunday's cup quarter-finals. But four of their number are representing England in the Fionne Countries Under-18 and Under-16 championships at Milton Keynes this weekend.

Olton asked the AEWHA for a postponement. When this was refused, their sponsor offered to fly the four to Ipswich, England's last match ends at 2.40 on Sunday. The club asked if the start could be deferred from 1.30 to 4pm. But rules, like dates, are set in stone, and exceptions prove nothing but trouble. All results have to be in by 4.50.

ORBIT International took a call from Newcastle United on Monday: "We understand our ice hockey club have qualified for some championships this weekend," began the inquiry. They had the Wembley summit of the British Championship, which Orbit runs for the BHA. It must be hard for Sir John Hall to keep track that day he was buying the Newcastle Comets, adding basketball to his empire.

ONLY an eccentric would like a world championship to Baghdad, and only Saddam Hussain put up £1.3 million for a chess series between Karpov and Kasparov, which the international federation Fide is passing off as a world title. It is a marriage made in megalomania.

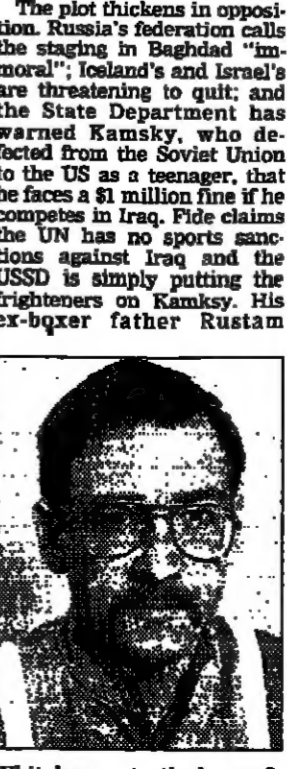
Last autumn Kiran Iyengar became Fide's president. As head of Kalmykia he seduced Saddam with a plot of land in the Caucasian mountains and befriended the American Bobby Fischer, former world champion, who had long alienated the US State Department. Another plot has been offered for him to build a house in the shape of a rook. A chessman's home is his castle.

The plot thickens in opposition. Russia's federation claims the staging in Baghdad "immoral"; Iceland's and Israel's are threatening to quit; and the State Department has warned Kasparov, who defected from the Soviet Union to the US as a teenager, that he faces a \$1 million fine if he competes in Iraq. Fide claims the UN has no sports sanctions against Iraq and the USSR is simply putting the firefighters on Kasparov. His ex-boxer father Rustam

THE Olympic flame will be kindled in Olympia tomorrow. On Sunday six Britons will run with it for nine miles through the Talygotes mountains in Sparta — the first Britons to carry the torch since 1948. It is a century-old idea of the International Olympic Academy. The IOC's educational arm. All six have done time at the study centre in Olympia. They include Kevin Whitney, the official Olympic artist in London, who will record impressions for a later painting.

The flame will go round Greece for a week, Europe for three and then by plane (avoiding of course) from Greece to the United States. Branson has surely missed a trick there.

NOT all hearts in the hierarchy of women's hockey are stony. After Wednesday's victory over France the GB Olympic coach Sue Slocombe informed her squad that she and David Whitaker, the men's coach, were what David Mellor calls "an item". Christine Whitaker is wondering if it was after 4.30.



Whitaker... tactical move?

NatWest
Notice to Cardholders

National Westminster Bank announces the following changes in interest rates

Credit Cards

effective from (and including) 1st May 1996

	Monthly Rate	APR Purchased	APR Advanced
NatWest Access	1.63%	22.9%*	24.8%
NatWest Visa	1.63%	22.9%*	24.8%

Condition 11 of Conditions of Use will accordingly be amended to reflect these new rates with effect from 1 May 1996.

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Boxing

Benn coming back for Collins

Jack Masarik

THERE comes a time for every warrior to hang up his shield. The tricky part is recognising that time, something many a champion fails to do. Jersey Joe Walcott drew on his own experience when he charred his own signs of decline. "There are three stages," he said, "ticking them off on his fingers. 'First your timing goes. Then your legs go. Then your friends go.'"

The time for Nigel Benn to go was surely on March 2, when he lost the World Boxing Council super-middleweight title to Thulane "Sugar Boy" Malinga in Newcastle. The fight went to a majority points verdict, but the final bell found Benn bleeding from the nose and mouth, his right eye clamped shut by a swelling the size of a tennis ball. "I think I've done enough for British boxing," he told the crowd that night.

Not so, it appears. The Malinga business was all a case of mistaken identity. That wasn't me in the ring," said Benn in London yesterday as his promoter Frank Warren announced plans for an immediate comeback.

Negotiations were under way, said Warren, for Benn to challenge the WBO champion Steve Collins, twice a winner over Chris Eubank, in England or Ireland before the end of June, possibly on the same bill as Malinga's next fight, and with the winners to meet for the unified title.

Good news for the Dark Destroyer, or is it? Didn't he come close to destruction himself a month ago, roughed up by a skilful but light-punching South African whose negging jabs he would once have waded through?

Merely a strategic error, said Benn. "I trained too hard for Malinga, harder than for McClellan. I left the fight in the gym."

But what about his retirement announcement that night? Surely as public and unequivocal as the marriage proposal he made on bended knee to his girlfriend Caroline in the same Newcastle ring?

A hasty decision, since revised in the cold light of day. "I don't want to go out a loser. I've been world champion for four years and I feel naked without that belt," said Benn, a relaxed figure in a loose-cut black pinstripe suit, his facial contours — now back to normal — framed by a

Roud Gullit hairstyle and square-edged gold earrings. "Caroline's been very good, she understands I have to do what I want to do. It's better than taking a year off then coming back and really getting hurt. It's not been a long time. I'm still young, still racing to go. I don't feel bashed up. I'm still laughing and joking. I enjoy boxing. It's made me wealthy, very happy and it's made me successful."

Had his friend Frank Bruno influenced his decision? "No. I haven't spoken to him since Las Vegas, but I don't think Frank wants to retire either. He's still hungry. We'll see."

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